

GAME ON! USA

THE MAGAZINE OF ELECTRONIC MANGA GAMING



FEATURE PRESENTATION

The Fight of Your Dreams

NEWSLINE

SAMURAI SHODOWN RPG
ROBOTECH: CRYSTAL DREAMS
GRANDIA
RESIDENT EVIL 2

COMIX

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II: CAMMY CONCLUSION!
SAMURAI SHODOWN

SQUARE, DREAM FACTORY AND
AKIRA TORIYAMA ARE A TRIPLE
PUNCH FROM TOBAL NO.1

A HARD DAY'S KNIGHT

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GAME ONLINE!



November is close enough to the end of 1996 that it's possible to look back, and it's been a landmark year in gaming. The Nintendo 64, *Virtua Fighter 3*, and the first inklings of *Street Fighter 3* have all appeared, surpassing everyone's expectations. With American *Robotech* and *Gundam* games announced, and plans for unlikely long-shot titles like dating simulation *Tokimeki Memorial* to reach the U.S., it seems like anything could happen.

Along with many video games, Japanese anime and mang a is also entering the cultural eye. (Of course, it's not 100% accepted yet—*Game On! USA* still gets calls from people asking whether it's about Italian dining (that's *mangia*) and games.) It's especially interesting to watch the efforts of some American artists, in cases ranging from the packaging of Sony's *Beyond the Beyond* to the character design for Team 17's *World Rally Fever*, to imitate the manga style. Considering the nationalism that often invades other areas of the America-Japan scheme (such as the auto industry), the free trade of video games is impressive; *Killer Instinct* is coming to Japan just as military simulations are coming to America. With all the cultural back-and-forth, great experiments are taking place.

Game On! USA has been such an experiment, and in many ways the response has been good. The link between manga and games has been proven; readers have consisted of a mixed crew of game players, anime watchers, fan artists, and mangaphiles. At times the division between Japanese games and worth-covering American games has seemed vague—but what better sign of how much each side is influencing the other? And lastly, Your Editors have gotten to go through a lot of excellent comics.

Possibly *too* many comics. *Game On! USA's* genre ("Is it a comics magazine or a game magazine?" we asked in #4) has been admittedly indefinite, a kind of seesaw between game coverage and manga. Although 99% of readers liked the manga, we realize that we may have overdosed on it—as one reader put it, stuffed ourselves

with manga "cake" while not providing enough "meat and potatoes." In the future, we'd like nothing better than to release a new magazine: one with twice as much game information, with more reviews, more previews, more color art, more interviews with developers in Japan.

In the meantime, this is the last issue of *Game On! USA*. We're going to another plane of existence—the Web. Debuting November 22, *Game Online! USA* at <http://www.j-pop.com/games> will have everything we didn't have space to use and more, by the same creative team and with the same concept. Using our Japanese resources, we'll have constantly updated information; the same news direct from Japan; reviews with a real numerical rating system; and the same manga and anime touch we have in *Game On! USA*.

The Editors and staff of *Game On! USA* thank you for your support in what's been an awe-inspiring year. From the floors of E3, to the headquarters of Capcom, Square, Sega and SNK, it has been our pleasure to produce the print magazine for you, knowing that many of you have been with us since the premiere issue. 1996 has proven that manga and gaming *are* linked; and it won't be long before American companies as well as Japanese ones acknowledge the demands of manga gamers.

Until then, see you on the Web!

Jason Thompson
game_on@sirius.com

Game Online! USA is available at <http://www.j-pop.com/games>, launch date November 22.

ATTENTION: Andre Devon and Nick Celani, please write to us with your address so we can mail you your prizes (Letter Column Contest). Osewa ni narimashita!

And now, announcing the Project Horned Owl Contest Winners!

Grand Prize (PlayStation console, Project Horned Owl™ game, Konami Enforcer™ light gun): Amjid Qureshi (Winnipeg, Canada). First Prizes (Project Horned Owl™ game, Konami Enforcer™ light gun): Daniel Lopez (Reisterstown, MD); Tim Wooten (Victorville, CA); Felix Pineiro (Chicago, IL); C. Johnson (Madison, WI); Matthew S. Armstrong (Sandy, UT). Second Prizes (Project Horned Owl™ game): Charles Rengel (Newport Beach, CA); Robert Rada (Naperville, IL); Vanessa Ferguson (Torrance, CA); Danny Maraglio (Oceanville, NY); David Starr (Toronto, Canada). Third Prizes (PlayStation T-shirts): Ultrajoe, Chris Orman, John McMillian, Peter Kong, P. Martakis, Tony Coleman, M. Pappas, Danny Morgan, Ali Mitchell, James White, Bryan Chee, Joel Pike, V. de la Garza, William Ertzman, Albert Phimphone, Joe Sali, Timothy Hulsizer, Gene Carroll, Jorge G. Abriles, Christian Clark, Nathan Gergetz, SMN, R. Gilmore, Rob Izenon, Tim Ng. Congratulations, and thanks to everyone who resisted the temptation to send in 50 entries. If you haven't received notification about your prizes yet, you will soon.

contributing writer



Jay McGavren (*ON! Command*) now claims to be addicted to both *Worms* and *Crash Bandicoot* (Mario who?), but between trying to explore though *Kings Field III*, the impending arrival of his *Street Fighter Zero 2*, and his attempts to hack codes for this issue, he wonders when he'll have time to feed his habits.

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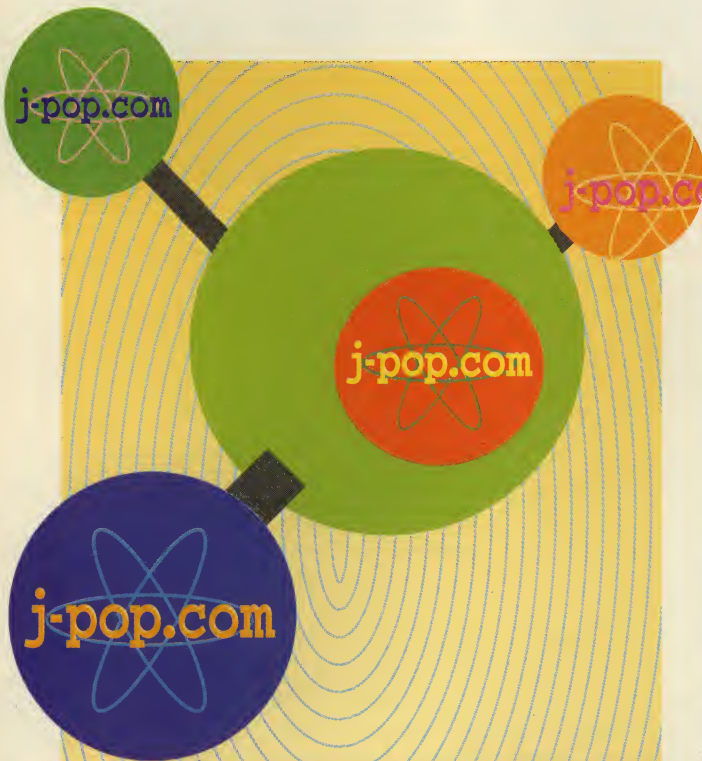
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TOBAL
feature

the Fight of Your Dreams



Dream Factory,
Square and Sony
not to mention
Akira Toriyama
present a new kind
of 3D fighter

Dream On

Interested in the fighting tournament on Planet Tobal, where the alien Emperor Udan invites the champions of his mining planet to duke it out for good-natured supremacy every year? No? Perhaps in a 3D fighting game from a new developing company with no past hits under their belts? Or not precisely *no* hits—the developers of *Tobal No. 1* for PlayStation are a crew of expatriates from the 3D fighting game teams of Namco and Sega. With the intention of doing better than these companies, *Tobal No. 1* (released in August in Japan) has big boots to fill. Sony Computer Entertainment America trusts it enough to release it in America this month.

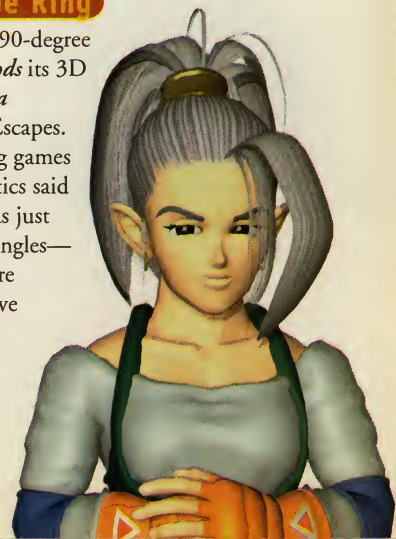
Dream Factory was formed as a side-effect of the video game secrecy which keeps developers' names and faces secret; the programmers of *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter* left their respective fighting games, and the anonymity of working on them, to form the new company. The alliance with Square and Akira Toriyama was just what they needed. The Project Director for *Tobal No. 1*, Seiichi Ishii, wanted a game which would be easy to play. The CG Designer, Masahiro Onoguchi, worked on

bringing the look of Akira Toriyama, character designer, to 3D for the first time.

In Japan, *Tobal* isn't marketing itself on its full-360 gameplay, but on Toriyama's character designs. Manga superstar Toriyama (known best for *Dragon Ball*) provides the character designs for the game, as well as the opening and closing CG movies. The resulting 'cartoony' look disguises serious gameplay.

All Over the Ring

Toshinden has its 90-degree rotations, *War Gods* its 3D button and *Virtua Fighter 3* has its Escapes. When 3D fighting games first appeared, critics said that the action was just 2D with camera angles—but more and more games recently have incorporated 3D control. But in all these cases 3D is performed with buttons; *Tobal*



No. 1 is the first game to have 3D control with the joystick. Push up to go into the background, down to go closer to the camera.

It'll be obvious how much this changes things the first time you spin halfway around your opponent to catch them from behind, or—more impressively—nudge just a little to the left and dodge Mary's right-swinging wind-up punch, for example. Figuring out what moves are likely to hit your opponent from what angles could be the most complex fighting strategy you've ever performed, if you managed to do it, and there's enough variety of moves to make it worthwhile. As sidestepping is easy, Ring Outs aren't common, and the matches are set at a default 30 seconds to keep from degenerating into running around the room. Luckily, most characters' range is good enough to avoid this.

Although blocking remains important, one side-effect is that the jump button ends up not being used as much as in other games; you'll have to check your Jumping Fierce Kick/Crouching Fierce Kick combos at the door. Special moves are accomplished mostly with



button-press combinations, lacking many simultaneous button presses or circling motions. Dream Factory is especially proud of the grappling system, which turns throw moves from a free hit to a complicated struggle for dominance; who will throw who, and how? Since the R1 button is used for grappling *and* blocking, its importance increases.

Tobal's music ranges from good to unassuming, and its graphics can best be described as "crisp"; the colors are bright (including the afterimage effects) and distinguish the polygons from one another with very little texturing. The characters' polygon count is fairly low, but movement is smooth (watch the capes and clothing for extra motion). Polygon count is traded for graphical touches like the moving objects in the 3D backgrounds. While not large, they add extra life.

Quest for Bosses

You can do a lot with a true 3D game engine. Dream Factory realized this; if you make a 3D street fighting game, why not a 3D upgrade to fighting side-scrollers, or another genre? Cross the Tournament Mode of *Tobal* with a corridor game like *Doom* or *Zybots*, and you have *Tobal's* Quest Mode.

Using the *Tobal* engine's natural 360-degree movement, you explore dungeons to get to the bottom level and win the use of the boss characters in Versus mode. Dancing swords, floor-triggered darts, pits and boulders make the corridors dangerous. You can collect Moldoran



crystals to buy random items, and run into small enemies along the way; lizardmen, ghouls, walking puppets, each with their own moves. The turning isn't easy at first, and there's wall clipping, but for once a puzzle-solving, and maze-navigating, element mixes with a fighting game. Everything comes together logically.

Beating the first dungeon accesses Snork, "Small Nork," a half-size *chibi* version of the big blue second-to-last boss. The next dungeons give you Mufu and Udan—but beyond that is a maze 30 levels deep, at the bottom of which is a mysterious final boss. In Japan, this is Tori, the dreaded Toriyama-Robo, who looks just like Akira Toriyama's comic self-portraits (a reference which will surely be lost on most Americans). Lest you think you can waltz through the Quest Mode, consider this: the first dungeon has one "star" indicating its difficulty, a later dungeon has four stars, and the final dungeon has...an infinity symbol. Intimidated yet?

Tobal No.2?

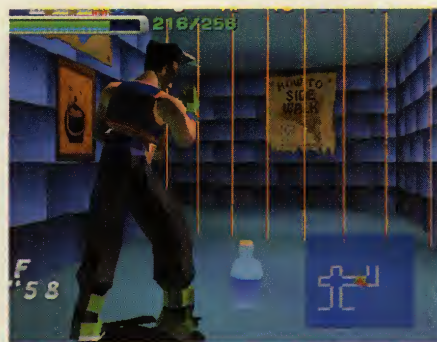
Dream Factory is currently publishing in Japan exclusively through Square, and their next title has not yet been announced. With all this, though, the news is out on Square; it's not just RPGs any more. And Dream Factory, now free to be acknowledged for their efforts instead of working in anonymity, will hopefully continue to push the envelope of fighting games. ☞



Emperor Udan: Moth, bunny, bat or...what?



The enormous Nork makes Tekken's Kuma look small.

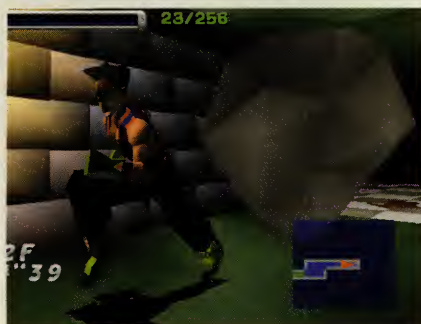


Dreaming in

3D

Exclusive Interview

In the days of 3D fighting games, with games like VF3 upping the ante, technology is becoming increasingly important. When once any company could make a reasonably good-looking 2D game, now the expertise required to handle 3D movement is forcing smaller companies to license technology such as Sega's and Namco's, or to invest heavily in new R&D teams. But new companies, like Dream Factory, can still spring up successfully. Especially when, like Seiichi Ishii, President and CEO of Dream Factory, they've already worked for the big companies...and they've decided how to do it better.



Game On! USA interviewer Toshifumi Yoshida spoke to Mr. Ishii to find out how Dream Factory began...what they're planning...and what's at the bottom of the Quest Mode.

Game On!: To begin with, when was Dream Factory founded?

Ishii: Last November.

Game On!: We understand that the staff are people who left the big arcade fighting game companies.

Ishii: Yes. Various staff members who worked on 3D fighting games came together to form a company to make a new fighting game. We have 17 members; that's the whole company.

Game On!: Do you plan to release *Tobal No.1* on other platforms, or only on PlayStation?

Ishii: *Tobal* was designed just for PlayStation. We're considering possibly going into the PC game market using DOS-V...I was in the United States market back in August and I realized that the American PC market is pretty big.

Game On!: What's the basic concept behind *Tobal*?

Ishii: Most of us were very unhappy with the current state of combat games...we decided to join up and make games that did the things we'd always wanted combat games to do.

Game On!: How is it different from other combat games?

Ishii: The most notable point is the fact that you can move anywhere within a 3D plane, in 360 degrees. We designed the game so that if it was played with a 3D joystick, you could really control the movement.

Game On!: Where did the Quest Mode come from? Did you plan to put the Quest Mode in from the beginning?

Ishii: We never planned to release it in the arcade, so yes, we planned it right from the start. It was created with the consumer in mind, for the home machines, so we wanted to make it playable by yourself, instead of just fighting the computer. That makes it a bit more interesting for one player.

Game On!: *Doom* and other types of 3D games are popular here in America. Do you think it'd be kind of cool if you could create your own levels, like you can with *Doom*, if a PC version came out?

Ishii: I really enjoyed the game called *Dungeon Master* where you go around and create a party and fight monsters, and I thought I'd love to see a combat game with those kinds of graphics.

Game On!: I've heard you quoted as saying that *Tobal* is interesting for the first-time player and even more interesting for the experienced player. There are people at the office who don't even know the moves, and they're still coming over to take a look at it.



Ishii: Well, *Tobal* is set up in such a way that if you just repeatedly hit the attack buttons, since there's no designated punch or kick buttons you get a variety of attacks even if you keep hitting the same buttons over and over. So for a first-time player it could look very cool. When you become a veteran, you start learning all the grabbing moves and throwing moves, and you begin to see a whole new world. And since you move in a 3D environment, you can learn to grab or attack people from the side, or from behind, which you couldn't do in previous games. You can do some really complex movements.

Game On!: Regarding character design, did you plan to use Toriyama from the very beginning?

Ishii: Yes.

Game On!: Is he easy to work with?

Ishii: I had a couple of basic ideas for the kinds of characters I wanted—characters with tails and such—and what he gave back to me exceeded my expectations.

Game On!: Did he design all the monsters in the Quest Mode as well?

We wanted to change the characters a bit for the U.S. release, so it had a different feel and look to it, but they didn't have the time to change anything.

Ishii: No, our designers did the monsters.

Game On!: I heard Mufu was originally a character, and after the addition of Gren, he became one of the bosses. Is this true?

Ishii: Gren was a character we added at the last minute. We wanted to have a rival to the main character, Chuji, so we pleaded Mr. Toriyama to draw us another character. Before that, there were only two bosses.

Game On!: Who's the favorite character of the staff? In an interview with PlayStation magazine [*in Japan—Ed.*], one of the team said it was Hom.

Ishii: Well, I figure if you interview the various staff members, they'll tell you the character they designed is their favorite.

Game On!: How about you then?

Ishii: I like Chuji the best...Gren, Chuji. It was my idea for those characters... (*grins*)

Game On!: What was your reasoning for making Nork,

as a playable character, turn into Small Nork or Snork?

Ishii: Well, if we left him the same size he was he would have become pretty unplayable, practically impossible to play head to head. And it ruins the balance of the game.

Game On!: It's coming out in the United States in November, and the Toriyama designs aren't exactly a selling point over here. At first glance, the graphics aren't as strong as other 3D polygon games out on the market. Did you originally plan for this game to be released only in Japan, or did you have the world market in mind when you designed it?

Ishii: We wanted to change the characters a bit for the U.S. release, so it had a different feel and look to it, but they didn't have the time to change anything.

Game On!: Did Toriyama come up with the setting and story, or did you plan it yourself?

Ishii: The basic background story that the world is set around was written by Toriyama. The rest was filled in by the staff.

Game On!: Do you plan to continue working with Square, or is Dream Factory going to release games directly?

Ishii: We plan to stay with Square. We're already working on the next game.

Game On!: Are there plans for any anime or manga based on *Tobal*?

Ishii: We don't have plans for any right now. Personally, I'd love to see a comic drawn by Toriyama...I'd be really happy if he would do one.

Game On!: Do you have any advice for people playing the Quest Mode?

Ishii: Choose where you use your items wisely. It's set so that if you use them in the right places, you can clear the game.

Game On!: Is it set so that you must have a certain number of strength and defense points to get to a certain dungeon level, or do the monsters respond to your power level and change accordingly?

Ishii: No, the monsters' strength is preset to a certain level, so the stronger you get earlier, the more fun it will



be to play. Since it all depends on your combat abilities, if you become a really good fighter, there's a possibility you can get through the game without having to get the power ups. They get pretty tough unless you power up along the way, though.

Game On!: What's your advice for playing head to head?

Ishii: Learn to use the 3D environment to your advantage. If people are coming at you, instead of blocking, get out of the way, so you can attack them from their open side.

Game On!: So you're saying that if you get to an advanced level and learn to move around and block really well, it can become like a Jackie Chan kung-fu movie, with the fight lasting really long?

Ishii: Yes. It's pretty intense just watching two advanced people play. You don't get bored.

Game On!: It seems that the jump button's a fairly useless button...you seem to be left wide open when you jump. There are no jumping techniques, are there?

Ishii: No, but when you get really advanced, it's sometimes good to use it to avoid a low kick or a sweeping kick.

Game On!: I notice you can't crouch that well in the game. In some games you can crouch and block and be pretty well protected. I don't see that in *Tobal*.

Ishii: Well, if you watch a real martial arts exposition, you don't see the real martial artists just crouching and defending themselves during an attack. And it's pretty weak visually, so we tried to get away from that in the game.

Game On!: What's after *Tobal*? Is there going to be a sequel?

Ishii: There's a lot of plans right now. We do have plans for a new game, but it's going to be a completely different game from *Tobal No. 1*.

Game On!: Lastly, do you have any messages for the readers in the United States?

Ishii: Well, my number one wish is that with this game's ability to have a 360-degree fighting field, and its introduction to the Quest Mode, I would like everyone to take a look at it and try it out.

Game On!: Thank you, Mr. Ishii. ☞



Akira Toriyama:

Last Boss of the Manga World

American gamers won't buy **Tobal No. 1** for the same reasons Japanese gamers will. The characters are designed to appeal to the millions of Japanese fans of Akira Toriyama, whose artistic style has translated reasonably well to 3D (admittedly by putting many of the polygons in the characters' faces). Toriyama is best known for creating **Dragon Ball**, possibly the most popular manga ever; in the process, though, he's inspired or worked on over 30 video games.

Dragon Force

Toriyama, a design school graduate born in 1955, started work as a manga artist in 1978 in the weekly magazine **Shonen Jump**. His first popular series, the childish and funny **Dr. Slump** (about an incompetent scientist and his little-girl android), started in 1980 and ran 'till 1984 (a TV series ran from 1981 to 1986). His fifteen minutes of fame—which have stretched to more than ten years—truly began, however, in 1984 with the publication of **Dragon Ball**.

Dragon Ball became a smash hit, and propelled **Shonen Jump's** circulation to 6.5 million at its height (and that's *weekly*...). The hero of **Dragon Ball** (at least initially) is young Son Goku, a Saiyajin ("were-monkey") who is raised by a human and inspired to seek out the seven Dragon Balls, which, when gathered together, will grant their owner any one wish. The series, loosely inspired by the Chinese legend of the Monkey King, follows Goku on his adventures as he saves the Earth from



Dragon Ball Z—Buu Yu Retsuden



Dragon Ball Z—Kyoshō Saiyajin

aliens, demons, and general bad guys, and increases his martial arts ability beyond the point of all reason. Goku's fireball-like super attack—**Kamehameha!**—may even be the inspiration for **Street Fighter's hadoken**. Eventually Goku passed the mantle on to his son, and the story continued through another generation. The series finally ended in late 1995.

The combination of humor, friendship and fight scenes with horribly nasty villains was such a hit it developed into a TV series in 1986. After the series' first end, the studio reconsidered stopping it (the manga was still going strong) and restarted it under the name **Dragon Ball Z**. Several animated movies followed. In 1995 the **Dragon Ball** TV series was first broadcast on American TV by Funimation, with mildly objectionable bits digitally edited (digital underwear now appears in some scenes). It did well, and is continuing in the 1996 TV season. Meanwhile, in Japan, early 1996 marked the beginning of the new TV series **Dragon Ball GT**, going back to the origins of the series by reverse-aging the main character.

Disk Drives & Dragons

In addition to working on **Dragon Ball**, Toriyama started early to design characters for video games. Working for Enix, in 1986 he character-designed the Famicom/NES RPG **Dragon Quest (Dragon Warrior** in the U.S.), with such



cartoony-yet-deadly monsters as the ubiquitous Slimes. The **Dragon Quest** series has since gone up to six, as far along as **Final Fantasy**, and moved up to the Super Famicom. Other Toriyama games included the little-seen **Torneco's Great Adventure**. Toriyama even supervised the character design for the two **Dragon Quest** TV series, one of which was tested in the U.S. in 1990 as **Dragon Warrior**.



Dragon Warrior 3



Dragon Ball Z—Suupaa Son Goku Den

Toriyama's experience with Square (ironically, Enix's traditional rival) started with 1995's RPG **Chrono Trigger**. *Tobal No. 1* continues that relationship. However, the greatest video game ventures for Toriyama are the many adaptations of *Dragon Ball*.

Becoming a success in the heyday of the original Famicom, *Dragon Ball* was quickly adapted into video games by Bandai. Nearly every kind of game engine was used to tell the story, from side scrollers to RPGs, and nearly every system had an adaptation, from the Genesis to the PlayStation to the ill-fated Bandai Playdia (and at least two arcade games). Hardly any adaptations have appeared in the U.S. except 1987's

Dragon Power (unrecognizable as the source material), and unsubstantiated rumors about another translation.

Dragon Ball—Daimao Fukatsu was one of several games to use a "battle card" system, which sacrificed action for the strategic choosing of 'cards' with different attacks and damage values. Several RPGs handled different pieces of the ongoing story, with top-down viewpoints, 3/4-view battle scenes, and animated sequences. **Dragon Ball Z—Tenkaichi Budokai** jumped onto the 1992 Japanese "barcode battler" craze as a fighting game which required you to enter barcodes into a special peripheral to access and strengthen different characters. Several games, including the PC Engine's **Dragon Ball Z—Son Goku Densetsu** and the Saturn and PlayStations' **DBZ: Idainaru Dragon Ball Densetsu**, abandoned the traditional 2D fighting mode for a more anime-like "energy tug-of-war" (to quote one player) which, depending on your opinion, focused on either strategy or button-pounding. But many straight 2D fighting games are still available, each offering different features—split-screen modes, new life meters, new special moves, and new characters, characters, characters! No game has ever accommodated *everyone* in *Dragon Ball*. Most



Dragon Power

recently, Bandai has announced a true 3D fighting game for PlayStation based on the new TV series, *Dragon Ball GT*, starring the newly childlike Goku.

Akira Toriyama and his company, Bird Studio, have recently been celebrated in artistic exhibits across Japan. At some of these, *Dragon Ball* video games were playing; a fitting tribute.

Many thanks to David Rutledge's *Dragon Ball* pages (<http://www.chickasaw.com/~david>) and Glenn Wang's guide (<http://www.netcom.com/~brief/dbfaq/a/games.html>). 98



AKIRA TORIYAMA'S DRAGON CONSOLE GAMES

Date	System	Name	Type
1986	Famicom	Dragon Ball—Shenron no Nazo (Riddle of Shenlong)	Action side-scroller (US: Dragon Power)
1986	Famicom	Dragon Quest	RPG (US: Dragon Warrior)
1987	Famicom	Dragon Quest II	RPG (US: Dragon Warrior II)
1988	Famicom	Dragon Ball—Daimao Fukatsu (Return of the Demon King)	RPG with "battle cards"
1988	Famicom	Dragon Quest III	RPG (US: Dragon Warrior III)
1989	Famicom	Dragon Ball—Goku Den (History of Goku)	RPG with "battle cards"
1990	Famicom	Dragon Quest IV	RPG (US: Dragon Warrior IV)
1990	Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Kyosho!! Saiyajin (Attack Saiyajin!)	RPG w/ "battle cards"
1991	Famicom	Dragon Ball Z II—Gekishin Freeza (Planet Destroyer Freeza)	RPG w/ "battle cards"
1992	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Suupaasaiyajin Densetsu (Legend of the Super Saiyajin)	RPG w/ "battle cards"
1992	Famicom	Dragon Ball Z III—Resen ji Zo Ningen (Fight to the Death against the Cyborgs)	RPG w/ "battle cards"
1992	Super Famicom	Dragon Quest V	RPG
1992	Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Tenkaichi Budokai (World Fighting Tournament)	"Barcode" fighting game
1993	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Suupaa Butoden (Super Battle History)	Fighting
1993	Famicom	DBZ Gaiden—Saiyajin Setsu Metsu Keikaku (Plan to Eliminate the Saiyajin)	RPG; Original story
1993	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Suupaa Butoden 2	Fighting
1993	Super Famicom	Dragon Quest I & II	RPG (Re-released from Famicom version)
1994	Sega Megadrive	Dragon Ball Z—Buu-Yu Retsuden	Fighting
1994	PC Engine	Dragon Ball Z—Son Goku Densetsu (Legend of Son Goku)	Anime Fighting
1994	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Suupaa Butoden 3	Fighting
1994	Game Boy	Dragon Ball Z—Rival Tono Deai (Encounter with Rivals)	RPG
1994	Bandai Playdia	DBZ Gaiden—Saiyajin Setsu Metsu Keikaku	Interactive Anime
1995	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Suupaa Son Goku Den (History of Super Son Goku)	RPG
1995	PlayStation	Dragon Ball Z Ultimate Battle 22	Fighting
1995	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z—Suupaa Son Goku Den 2	RPG
1995	Sega Saturn	Dragon Ball Z—Shinbutoden (New Battle History)	Fighting
1995	Super Famicom	Chrono Trigger	RPG
1995	Super Famicom	Dragon Quest VI	RPG
1996	Super Famicom	Dragon Ball Z Hyper Dimension	Fighting
1996	Sega Saturn, PlayStation	DBZ: Idainaru Dragon Ball Densetsu (The Great Dragon Ball Legend)	Anime Fighting
1996	Super Famicom	Dragon Quest III	RPG (Re-released from Famicom version)
1996	PlayStation	Tobal No.1	Fighting
1997	PlayStation	Dragon Ball GT	Fighting

Who's Number One?

Character Strategies for Tobal no.1 *by Tyrone Rodriguez*

Chuji-Wu

Think of Chuji as the most well-rounded fighter in all of Tobal. Not as agile as, let's say, Fei, Chuji can still get out of a trap. This Tobal native has a good balance between strength and agility. His variety of combos and range of attacks allows for some good patterns.

His Low Egg spin (Down+Low Attack) can be followed with another kick. His

double fist punch (Forward+Mid Attack) can also get someone out of your hair. While you must master the timing, it is possible to change the combo during the actual combo. Chuji isn't a fighter to be used in close, you always want to have your opponent in a zone where you can continue to attack yet are safe from counter attacks.



Oliems

Chicken outfit and all, Oliems is the powerhouse of *Tobal No. 1*. His hits do copious amounts of damage and some of the combos can continue to juggle his opponent into submission. Speaking of combos, Oliems has the longest strings of consecutive attacks. He can link one combo to another seamlessly—this can come in useful if you want to knock someone out of the ring.

Due to his height, Oliems can miss some of the shorter combatants. You can try to avoid this dilemma by attacking low then going with one of his many overhead attacks. Steer away from using high attacks unless your opponent is tall enough to block them. You can always try to slam your opponent if they play the low game.



Hom

Our robotic friend shares a drunken monkey-like fighting style with Fei. Half of the time you don't know if Hom is dancing or fighting. He's got a decent-sized variety of attacks, but he's best suited for simple kicks and a few quick attacks here and there.

A mix of attacks works best. If you continue to use the same attack you will get rocked. His three level combo should be used sparingly (High Attack, Mid Attack, Low Attack) yet it is possible to use the Split Kick Upper Punch attack (Forward+Mid Attack, Mid Attack) without fear of retribution. It's not necessary to follow the kick with the extra attack. As a basic rule, Hom should be on the offensive after every attack, not his opponent.



Epon

It's not recommended you underestimate this young lady. She's quick and deadly. Epon is among the top fighters of Tobal. Her repertoire of moves is lethal. Epon relies mostly on kicks, but she has a few punches which can be used as knock-down attacks. She can attack with multiple kicks that may hit at different heights. She has numerous somersault kicks that have priority over other attacks depending on the situation. Her dashing somersault (Forward, Forward+Mid Attack) is used half a screen away and her flip kick (Back+Mid Attack) in close.

If you plan to win with Epon you must master her secret weapon in player versus player combat. Her lightning kick not only is lightning fast (hence the name), but also moves in 3D. What this means to you is that you can keep annoying your opponent with a constant barrage of low hitting kicks.



Fei

No, Fei has no relation to Yubei Yamada, Fo or Gen, they're not even friends. One thing in common is that they're all good fighters in their respective games. Fei looks and moves like Fo from *Toshinden*. He's the most nimble fighter on the planet Tobal.

Confusion—that is your best bet at winning with this ancient man, with a style of attack resembling Lei (of *Tekken 2*). Most of his attacks have multiple hits, and it is possible to leave out attack endings which could compromise your position, or leave in endings that would catch your opponent blocking the wrong way. His Flying Upper (Down+Mid Attack) has four different strengths. The more you press the button the stronger it will be when executed.



Ill

This devil-like fighter is a perfect candidate for playing a game of keep away. The distance and speed of his tail attacks will keep any opponent at bay when used in conjunction with complimentary attacks. It's possible to use Ill's tail alone for attacking but he will take damage. This no-finesse method can work, though.



Some of his combos are better off not being completed—if they are fully completed you will be counter attacked. A good example is his Punch, Kick, Punch combo (High Attack, Low Attack, High Attack). You can do up to three low kicks before actually hitting with another high punch, but you're much better off leaving the last punch out because it will more than likely miss the target. His safest in-close attack is performed by pressing Forward+Mid Attack, Mid Attack.

Gren

Ignore the fact that Gren looks like he stepped straight out of the *Dragon*

Ball universe and you will see that he is a very powerful character. Maybe it's the clothes he wears. Gren has a balanced amount of low, mid, and high attacks. Not only can he change his attack heights, but some of his better attacks appear to be low when they're actually high or vice versa.

Gren's recommended form of attack is counter attacking. The best strategy is the simplest, block your opponent's attacks then immediately go from your block stall into a combo or a knock down defensive attack, e.g. (High Attack, Mid Attack, Mid Attack) or (Forward+ Mid Attack). Keep in mind that if a combo is executed wrong you may end up knocking your opponent down.



Mary

Mary is the least favored character of Tobal. That isn't to say that she's worthless, just that everyone else is much better. What Mary lacks in speed and agility she partially makes up for in strength. In comparison to Oliems, her attacks will miss shorter opponents less often than the feathered one's attacks.

As Pai in *Virtua Fighter* can follow a blocked combo with the same combo over again so can Mary. Her Mid and High combos have enough speed behind them to repeat again. If near the edge of the ring Mary can knock her opponent off even if they've blocked her successive attacks. This is extremely cheap yet very effective. Although slower her low kick accomplishes almost the same thing.



PlayStation

Revelations: Persona

Atlus
Release Date: November (U.S.)

Like earlier entries in the legendary *Megami Tensei* series (which originated on the Famicom), *Revelations: Persona* is a mixture of disturbingly convincing demonology, super-science and sheer weirdness; this installment pits your party of high school students against everything from the undead, fairy-tale dwarves and elves, to angels. Monsters can be talked to prior to battle, and even forced to serve you and mixed together with alchemy. Three distinct interfaces are used: first-person corridor sequences, polygonal city maps (visible from various angles), and three-quarters walking scenes for certain areas as well as for battle. An added twist to each character (as well as part of the game's story) is the ability to transform into powerful archetypes, the "Persona." The appearances of some of the characters are different from the Japanese version, but the changes have been made by the original development team.



Midland

Future Soft
Release Date: TBA ("sometime in 1996") (Japan)



A realtime polygon RPG, *Midland* drops you as a female or male swordsman into a 3D maze-like environment visible from various camera angles. You'll fight dragons, scorpions, knights and others. *Midland* looks more action-oriented than other games of its sort, and may be best for a younger audience.

Resident Evil 2

Capcom
Release Date: TBA/Summer 1997

Resident Evil 2 (*Biohazard 2* in Japan) picks up where the first one ended, in the vicinity of Raccoon City. But the poison evidently wasn't stopped; now it's spread to the city, turning the inhabitants into carnivorous zombies, just like in *Dawn of the Dead*. This time around the characters are Leon Scott Kennedy, a young police officer, and Elza Walker, a college-age racecar driver. Hit locations and body armor are rumored. Screen shots indicate even bloodier and more desperate action than the first game...



Soul Edge

Namco
Release Date: December (Japan), First Quarter 1997 (U.S.)

The features of *Soul Edge ver. II* are incorporated into the home version of *Soul Edge*. In addition, each character will have an individual ending cinema (even bosses Hwang and Cervantes). The graphics don't have the same clarity on a TV screen, but the same swashbuckling gameplay is there.



King's Field II

ASCII
Release Date: October 30 (U.S.)

The sequel to the full-3D first-person RPG for PlayStation arrives in the States, this time with a stronger storyline and improved, more colorful graphics. The hero of *King's Field*, Alex, has given his life to imprison the possessed king of Verdite before his evil can destroy the kingdom; as Lyle, the prince of Verdite, you must now set off to take the Moonlight Sword and defeat your father. Music gives the world a more adventurous feel than the original's lonely noises, and the monsters now register damage much more convincingly, for a more satisfying feeling in combat.



The latest *Final Fantasy VII* characters are here! Tifa, a 20-year-old partying martial artist, is one of the main members of rebel group Avalanche but was also the childhood friend (and potential love interest) of main character Cloud. Cid, pilot of the airship *Highwind*, is foul-mouthed, passionate, and 32 years old. *Final Fantasy VII* was recently rescheduled for early 1997 on 3 CDs.



Final Fantasy VII ©1996 Square, Soul Edge ©1996 Namco Ltd., King's Field II ©1996 From Software, Inc. Published by ASCII Entertainment Software, Revelations: Persona ©1996 Atlus Software, Midland © Future Soft

PlayStation

New Super Robot Wars

Banpresto
Release Date: December (Japan)

The **Super Robot Wars** series, up to Number Four, were reliable hits of the Japanese Super Famicom; Bandai (parent company of Banpresto) owned the rights to so many robot series that they could actually put them all together, in one game, and let you use different super-deformed robots on opposing sides of a military simulation. Now it's on PlayStation, designed for newcomers to the series—and it's not super-deformed any more! A larger number than ever of realistic robots are your troops; after moving units around on the main map, you'll see RPG-like one-on-one fight sequences with dialogue by the good guys and bad guys involved. New giant robot designs are provided by Hajime Katoki, designer of the characters in *Virtual On*.



ROLE FIGHTING

Breath of Fire 3
Capcom
Release Date: Mid-1997 (Japan, U.S.)

Samurai Shodown RPG
PlayStation/Saturn/Neo•Geo CD SNK
Release Date: October (Japan)

Sure, they're not Square, Enix or Gamearts...so how will primarily action-game developers Capcom and SNK do with their latest RPGs?



Breath of Fire 3

Capcom's **Breath of Fire 3** takes the Super Famicom series to a fully 3D environment, with polygon backgrounds (through which you can maneuver a floating camera) in which sprite-based characters walk, mostly in a three-quarters view. The interface looks similar to **Grandia**. In the sequel, you begin the game as a baby dragon who is freed from a crystal in a mine, and later metamorphoses into a human boy.

Feeling the importance of the PlayStation and Saturn markets, SNK is developing three versions of **Samurai Shodown RPG** for different systems. Each game will be divided into two parts. The Neo•Geo CD version will contain the story of **Samurai Shodown** (the battle against Amakusa) and **Samurai Shodown 2** (the fight against the demon Mizuki). The PlayStation and Saturn versions will each contain slightly rearranged versions of one of the two chapters (**SS** for PlayStation, **SS2** for Saturn) as well as an original story, "The Sealing off of the Demon City." With PlayStation and Saturn versions appearing, there's even a chance of eventual U.S. release.



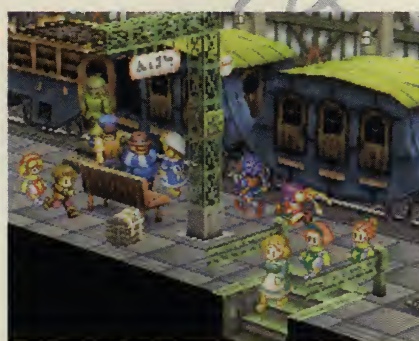
Samurai Shodown RPG

Saturn

A GRAND ENTERPRISE

Software development can be a hard life. Even if your game is successful, the publisher—if a big company like Sega, Sony, or Nintendo—can get all the credit. Now nine companies have merged to form a new entity to change this.

GNET, the Game Designers' Network, was the name of the project. Developer CSK funded the creation of the actual company, ESP, Entertainment Software Publishing, which combines several software houses who now want to make a name for themselves. The companies—primarily Saturn developers—include Alpha System, Gamearts (makers of many Sega games), Treasure (**Guardian Heroes**), CSK, Sting, Japan Art Media, Neverland, and Bits Laboratory.



Grandia

Gamearts
Release Date: Spring 1997 (Japan)

Could **Grandia** be Sega's **Final Fantasy VII** killer? In a direct contrast to **FFVII's** prerendered backgrounds, **Grandia** uses a "realtime polygon" system with texture mapping and loads of color making buildings and landscape features appear realistic, and allowing you to change your perspective at will. The game is built with the idea of having great attention to detail.

The world of **Grandia** takes place around the industrial revolution. The main character is Justin, a 14-year-old boy and would-be adventurer living with his mother in the city of Palm. When he makes enemies of the shadowy Garlyle forces, a private army hired by the Jewel conglomerate to dig up the ancient ruins of an older civilization, he ends up fighting them and exploring as far as an America-like new continent. There he meets Pheena, an experienced female adventurer; Pui, a mysterious animal; and other allies and foes.

CG movies and realtime 2D battles round out the game's presentation and interface. With Gamearts behind it, a development team of 150 people, and such beautiful graphics, it's hard not to see **Grandia** being brought to the U.S.

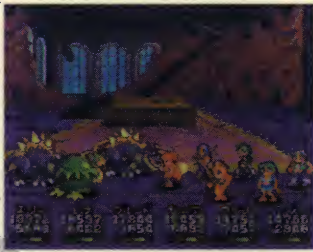


Breath of Fire 3 ©1996 Capcom Co. Ltd., Samurai Shodown RPG ©SNK/Fuji TV/Asatsu, Grandia © Gamearts, New Super Robot Wars © Aghi Productions, ©Sotsu Agency/Sunrise, ©Sotsu Agency/Sunrise/TV Asahi, ©Sunrise/NTV, ©Dynamic Planning, ©Toei Animation, ©Toei Animation, ©Tohoku Shinsha, ©Fuji TV/Toei, ©Banpresto 1996

Magic Academy Lunar

Gamearts/Developed by Studio Alex
Release Date: Spring 1997 (Japan)

This remake of the *Lunar* Game Gear game takes place in a parallel universe to the main storyline. The story is set at a magic user school on a floating island where kids learn magic, go through tests, perform training adventures, and (of course) compete with one another. The game depicts the characters' growth.



Magic Academy Lunar uses new, cuter-looking character designs, and has been made intentionally un-RPGlike to appeal to a younger audience. In battle scenes, as many as six people can fight on your side at one time.

Lunar: Eternal Blue

Gamearts
Release Date: Summer 1997 (Japan)

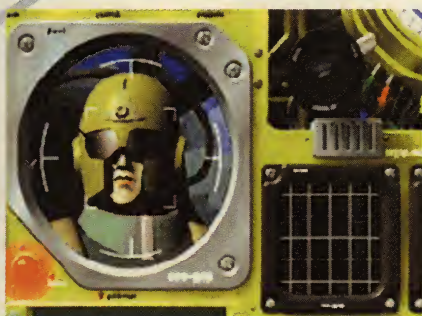
Another remake of the eternally popular series, this game is a Saturn version of *Lunar 2*, originally out for the Sega CD. The new adaptation may have more than the forty minutes of animation present in the Sega CD version (not to mention faster load time). As with the Saturn version of *Lunar: The Silver Star*, graphics, color and effects are being improved.



Heir of Zendor

Koei/Developed by Bignet USA
Release Date: December (U.S.)

Koei has always been one of the few companies to release the bread and butter of Japanese gamers, military simulation games, in the U.S. (Working Designs' *Iron Storm* being one exception). In *Heir of Zendor* (which was released in Japan for the PlayStation as *Gotha II*), you send fleets of airships against one another in military simulation combat in a fantasy world. Two viewpoints consist of an overhead view and a semi-3D view looking over the cloud cover behind your plane.



PTO II

Koei
Release Date: December (U.S.)

The Super NES and IBM versions of this military simulation are already available; now the Pacific arena of World War 2 comes to Saturn. This very detailed simulation ranges from diplomatic sequences (where you pick between different conversational strategies) as well as air, land and naval attacks. Changes from the 16-bit versions are planned.



Virtual On: Cyber Troopers

Sega
Release Date: November (Japan/U.S.)

The wait is over! Eight different humanoid—and not-so-humanoid—mechs go against one another in a 3D arena in the home version of Sega's arcade game. *Virtual On* bridges the gap between a *Cybersled*-like tank duel and a fighting game. The graphics are more pixelated and some of the backgrounds have less detail, but Sega promises exact gameplay, particularly with the new *Virtual On* double-joystick controller. The game will also be compatible with xband for multi-player networking.

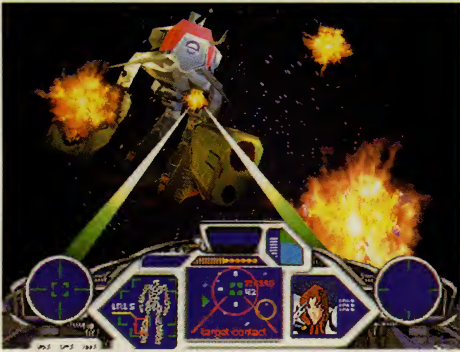


Cels and CD-ROMs

Upcoming Japanese game releases based on anime and manga.

Robotech: Crystal Dreams

Nintendo 64
Philips Media/Developed by Gametek
Release Date: December/January (U.S.)



The 85 American episodes of **Robotech** command terrific fandom, but have somehow never been made into a video game before. **Robotech: Crystal Dreams** is a flight simulation shooter set within the *Robotech* universe, with a storyline that unfolds through encounters with other characters, conversations, and your choice of which battles to fight and where to go in a real-time world (if you stay in combat too long, you'll even get exhausted and need to sleep). As disgraced ex-pilot Kyle Bartley, you must win back your respect and your Zentraedi girlfriend, Vala Norri, while fighting off the attack of a rogue group of Zentraedi and a strange crystal lifeform, Eboliar. The storyline is set just after the *Macross* saga, with Rick Hunter, Lisa Hayes and others making appearances.

Between battles you can spend money at the SDF-3 and other locations to upgrade and repair your Veritech. The Veritechs can transform into three modes, with a cockpit mode (in which you can look in any direction) and a behind-the-ship "tail gunner" mode. Various weapons help you to fight Pods, Battle Armor, the Veritechs of the militaristic Southern Cross, and hordes of Crystal opponents. Even the music of Minmay is included (though probably without many vocal lines due to cartridge restrictions).

Robotech: Crystal Dreams will be featured on **Game Online!** (<http://www.j-pop.com/games>).

Slayers

Saturn
GameArts/Kadokawa/Developed by Onion Egg
Release Date: Spring 1997 (Japan)

This RPG-based simulation adventure game is an original story set in the hack-and-slash **Slayers** world (as seen in the TV series released in the States by Software Sculptors). Magician/thief Lina Inverse and her evil-sorcerer pal are the main characters, depicted in both super-deformed and realistic styles.



Gundam 0079: The War for Earth

Pippin/PlayStation
Bandai/Developed by Presto Studios
Release Date: December/January (U.S., Japan)

Gundam 0079 stands out from a pack of other *Gundam* games with one fact; it's the only one so far developed in the U.S. for both the U.S. and Japanese markets, not to mention one of the first real games developed for the Bandai Pippin WWW/CD-ROM console.

With Presto Studios' past credits being primarily in multimedia, *Gundam 0079* has interactive-movie-like gameplay, but with action sequences as well. The universe is depicted in photorealistic 3D, with close to 30 minutes of CG animation, including 3D models of all the *Gundam* mobile suits. The story, approved by Sunrise Studios (the makers of *Gundam*), puts you in the place of a civilian who must don Mobile Suit Gundam to fend off the militaristic Zeon forces and their power-mad leader, Char Aznable. The Japanese version will feature some of the original voice actors. Look for more info on **Game Online!** as it appears!



Zeiram Zone

PlayStation
Banpresto
Release Date: November (Japan)

A 3D polygon side scroller, **Zeiram Zone** lets you play bounty hunter Iria on her quest to hunt down the mushroom-like artificial life form Zeiram, and presumably many other criminals and nasties as well. (It's based on the *Iria* anime released in America by U.S. Manga Corps.) The action is basically 2D, though you can change your POV in 3D and move between different attack levels as in **Final Fight**.



CHECKLIST What didn't fit into this issue?

Bandai

Dragon Ball GT (1997, Japan), a 3D polygon fighting game for PlayStation based on the new *Dragon Ball* TV series.

Banpresto

Battle Angel Alita (1997, Japan) for the PlayStation, using a 3D interface similar to *The Crow: City of Angels* or *Resident Evil* to put cybernetic hunter-warrior Alita into the dingy streets of the Scrapyard; and **Dragon Knight IV** (December), the PlayStation port of the PC and PC-FX game, cleaned up from the adult source anime, with a battle-simulation RPG interface.

Daiei/Digital Frontier

Gamera 2000 (TBA, Japan), a giant-monster-versus-aliens 3D PlayStation shooting game starring you as flying turtle Gamera and timed to coincide with the movie release of *Gamera, Guardian of the Universe*.

Jaleco

Jajamaru (1st Quarter 1997), a 3D Saturn game with a slightly *Floating Runner*-like interface starring you as a ninja in a danger-infested mansion; and an unknown 1st Quarter title.

Natsume

Highway 2000 (November), a driving game for Saturn; and **Virtual Casino** (December), a Saturn gambling game.

Sega

Landlock (1997, Japan), a much-rumored Saturn game with an anime tie-in and mecha designs by Masamune Shirow; and **Shining the Holy Ark** (End of 1996, Japan), a 3D RPG by the Sonic team and the next game in the *Shining Wisdom* series.

Seta

Several Nintendo 64 games, including a cart racing game, helicopter game and golf game, all developed in Japan.

SNK

Samurai Shodown 4 (November-December), which looks similar to *SS3* but puts five more characters, including returnees Charlotte, Tam Tam, Jubei and new brothers Kazuki and Sogetsu Kazama, into the fray. Too late for full coverage.

Sunsoft

Takeru (December 1996), a PC adventure game developed in Britain based on Buichi Terasawa's manga; and **Waku-Waku 7** (TBA, Japan), a Saturn version of their anime-based NeoGeo fighter (planned also for U.S. arcades!).

Working Designs

Serpent's Kiss (December), their first PC game and translation of a Japanese PC-RPG; **Albert Odyssey** (1997), a surprise translation of Sunsoft's Saturn RPG starring half-animal, half-human heroes; and the pushed-back **Lunar: The Director's Cut** (1997), Gamearts Saturn port of *Lunar: The Silver Star*.

Arcadeline

Overseas titles that may hit home.

Red Earth

Red Earth (*Warzard* in Japan), currently in testing, is the first game to use Capcom's CP111 system, which will also be used for a certain long-awaited sequel. CP111, still basically a 2D game board, uses interchangeable CDs in a way similar to the Neo•Geo's interchangeable cartridges, and has tons of RAM to remove any load time and allow hundreds of extra frames of character animation. Scaling, giant sprites and a huge number of onscreen colors completes the package.

Red Earth is a fantasy fighting/adventure game. A story mode lets you fight giant bosses (the number is not yet set in early test versions), though a mere four available characters makes **Red Earth's** versus mode essentially a curiosity. Play as ninja Kenji; Leo, the lion-headed warrior; Tessa, the magician; and Mai Ling, the Chun Li-like weapons master. **Red Earth** is clearing the ground for **Street Fighter 3**.



Street Fighter Gaiden

Capcom won't bring **Street Fighter 3** to 3D, but with **Street Fighter Gaiden** (working title) they take the plunge, aided new developer Arika. The six-button controls and gameplay will be as **SF2**-exact as possible, with the same counters, blocks, and easy jump attacks duplicated. Seven characters so far include Ryu, Ken, Zangief, Chun Li, and newbies D. Dark, Pullum and Skullomania (Skullo for short). The graphics resemble **Star Gladiator** and won't make Yu Suzuki lose much sleep, but it'll be interesting to see how well the **SF2** feel translates to the next dimension.



Solar Assault Gradius

As Capcom tries their 3D best, Konami plans the first 3D **Gradius** game, seen with a chase plane POV as you fly through metal tunnels and the stars. The Vic Viper and the Lord British return, though gameplay now involves a speed gauge and a shield gauge (possibly meaning you have only one life). The game takes you from the surface of the sun (hence the name) to bio-mechanical stages similar to **Lifeforce**. It'll come in a closed-cabinet version for fuller 3D effect.



top ten

Game On! Japan's Top Ten Games

This top ten list is based on sales, overall popularity, and industry expectations compiled by Game On!, one of the leading cross platform game magazines in Japan. The following list appeared in its October 1996 issue.

#1—Nights

Sega Saturn/Sega/Action
After the initial shock of **Mario 64** subsides, **Nights** demonstrates its popularity with a jump from 7th place. The analog controller really improves control on all the turning and swinging of **Nights**. Whereas Sony has more third-party games, Sega's much-hyped in-house games, such as **Nights**, are more consistent successes.

#2—Popolocrois Story

PlayStation/Sony Computer Entertainment/RPG
Aimed at both genders judging by its peaceful Japanese advertising (which shows sleeping players snuggled up in pink **Popolocrois** comforters), the game is leisurely and the graphics simplistic. Its reputation as a good, solid RPG quality have reportedly even made Sony of America consider it.

#3—World Stadium EX

PlayStation/Namco/Sports
The "next generation" of Namco's **Family Stadium**, an old title popular on Famicom and Super Famicom, **World Stadium EX** boasts completely changed controls. (Traditionally, one **Stadium** game was released each year, updating the statistics of the players to make a game the whole sports-conscious family could play.)

#4—Tobal No.1

PlayStation/Square/Fighting
The Japanese reaction to **Tobal No.1** has been good, with lots of extra coverage in the game magazines (such as **V-Jump**) owned by Shueisha, Akira Toriyama's exclusive publisher. Square's first combat game has much more complicated controls than its competitors. Is it closer to real combat?

#5—Hyper Olympic Atlanta

PlayStation/Konami/Sports
Despite the lack of character personality, **Hyper Olympic Atlanta** has outsold Sega's **Decathlete**. Maybe the Japanese teams will do better in the game than they actually did in Atlanta...

#6—Tokimeki Memorial—Forever with You

Sega Saturn/Konami/Simulation

#7—Super Mario 64

Nintendo 64/Nintendo/Action

#8—Noël

PlayStation/Pioneer LDC/Simulation

#9—Decathlete

Sega Saturn/Sega/Sports

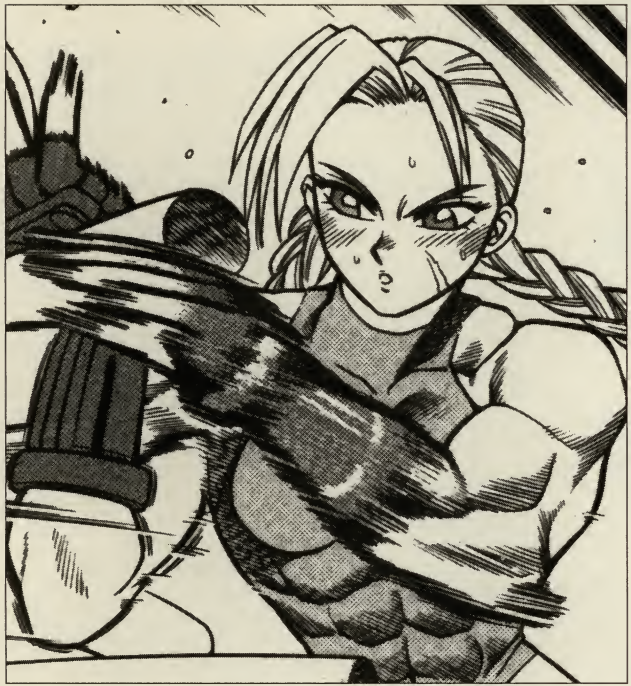
#10—Virtua Fighter Kids

Sega Saturn/Sega/Fighting

MANNGA

F E A T U R E S

Super Street Fighter II: Cammy

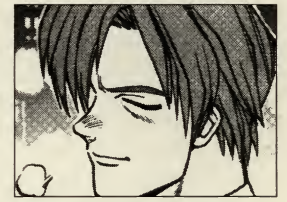


The story so far...

19-year-old Cammy has done a lot since she was found as an amnesiac three years ago. She's joined MI6, the British Special Ops team; she's stopped terrorists and traitors; she's done a lot of street fighting, too! In one fight (with the help of American major Guile), she busted an underground brainwashing operation and recovered enough of her memory to realize that she too had been brainwashed—designed as an ultimate soldier, for the armies of Shadowloo!

Now Shadowloo will do anything to bring Cammy back. They've sent thugs after her, shot her, locked her in a submarine...and just weeks ago, they lured her and MI6 to the jungle on the trail of a stolen nuclear component. More than a theft, it was a trap to pit Cammy against Vega, Shadowloo's fastest warrior! Stunned to face someone even quicker than her, Cammy could only watch as Vega demolished her fellow operatives—until a lucky move let her win. But the memory of almost losing to the egotistical sadist remains with Cammy, even back at MI6 headquarters. Is even Cammy vulnerable?

And how far will she go to prove that she could beat him—how far into the grasp of Shadowloo?



Name: Colonel Wolfman

Identity: Leader of MI6

Notes: Wolfman raised Cammy after her long period of amnesia. Now she has joined his team of elite government agents.



Name: Vega

Identity: Spanish Ninja

Notes: Vega will kill anyone for the sake of beauty...and what could be more beautiful than his own face?

Samurai Shodown



The story so far...

The samurai spirits seem to have failed. Only the Ainu priestess Nakoruru predicted the disaster, the Dark Kingdom that was causing plague, famine, and chaos to prepare for its coming in 1787 Japan. Gathering allies—the reckless samurai Haohmaru, and the Shogunate ninja Hanzo—she sought out the source of the evil. Each was a **samurai spirit**—a noble soul that could fight against the dark forces. But the forces were darker than they thought...

From the beginning they were under attack. A team of goblins led by the metal-clawed Gen-an, in the service of magician Yui Shosetsu, ambushed them by night. By day, Haohmaru found himself stalked by Nagiri of Kouga—a vengeance-mad ninja who wrongly blamed Haohmaru for killing her father. Nagiri was soon possessed by Shosetsu, and used as the ultimate weapon against the samurai, from which she could escape only by *hari-kari*. But Nagiri's death was not to be permanent...

After a pitched fight on Kikoku Island, Shosetsu accomplishes his goal—summoning the Yomotsu, a battleship manned by the dead. It ranges along the coast of Japan, spreading terror in its wake. And not only that—among the undead is a certain ninja. A ninja who hates Haohmaru...

Can three samurai fight against thousands? Now they have to try.



Name: Yui Shosetsu

Identity: Evil Sorcerer

Notes: Formerly known as Madou Shiranui, the resurrected military scholar now leads an army of the undead!

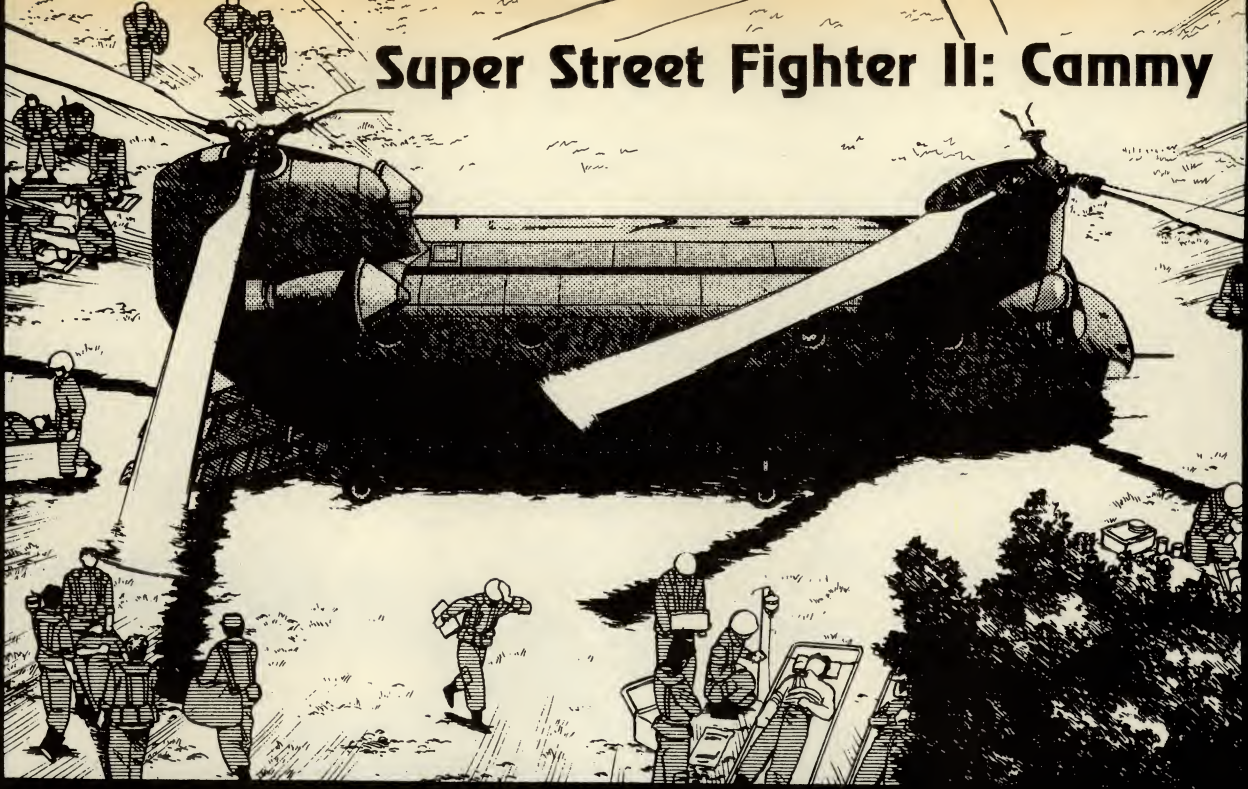


Name: Nagiri of Kouga

Identity: Ninja Assassin

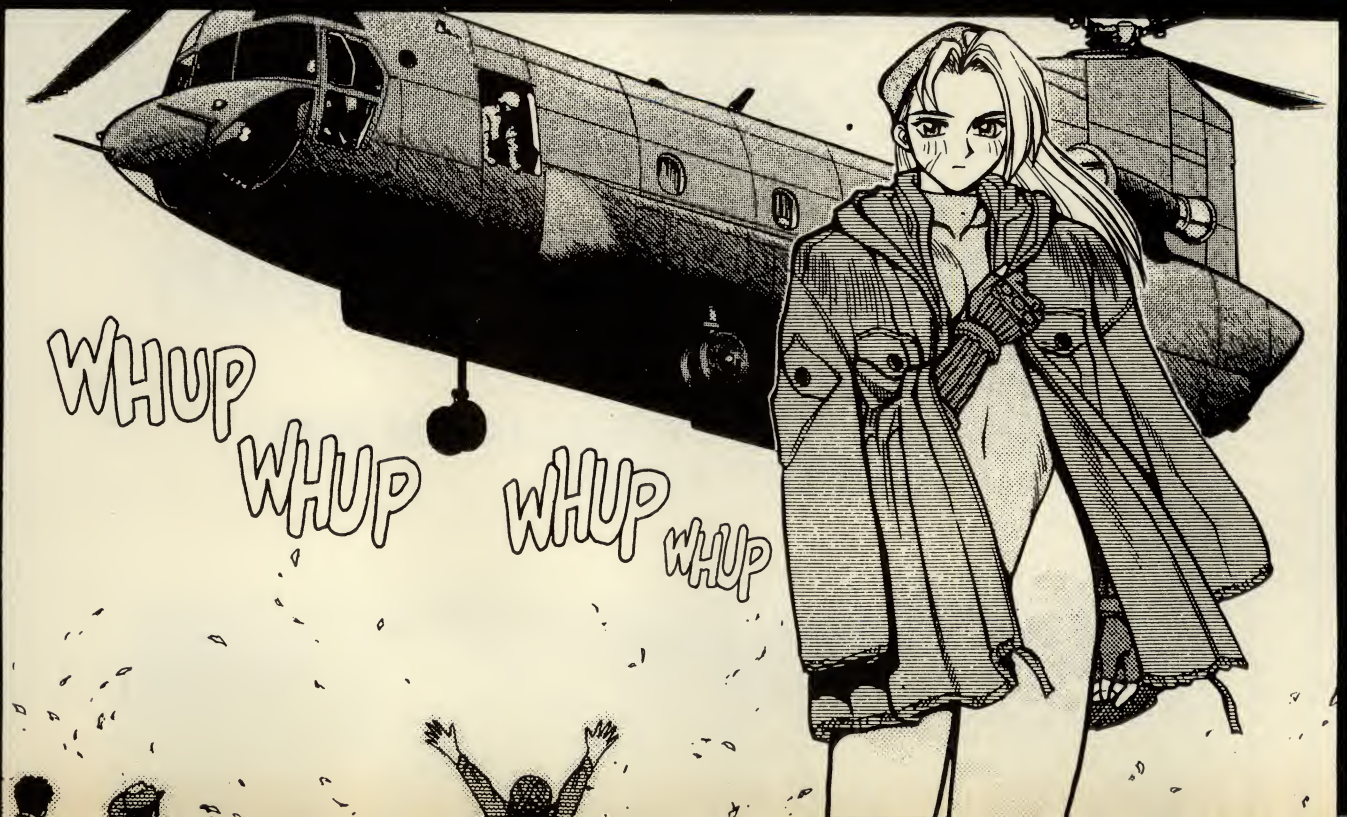
Notes: Brought back from the dead by Yui Shosetsu, all that remains of Nagiri is the desire for revenge on Haohmaru...

Super Street Fighter II: Cammy



Shadowloo Officer Vega's theft of plutonium was narrowly averted by Cammy's team.

Although the plutonium was successfully recovered, Vega escaped and many soldiers were injured. The team was far from victorious.





! ...
HAVE
TO GET
STRONGER
!

FIGHT SIX AN INVITATION FOR CAMMY

Story & Art by **MASAHIKO NAKAHIRA**

English Adaptation by **JAMES D. HUDNALL & LILLIAN OLSEN**

Lettering & Touch-up by **MARY KELLEHER**

© CAPCOM

For the purposes of publication in English, the artwork in this comic is in reverse from the original Japanese version.

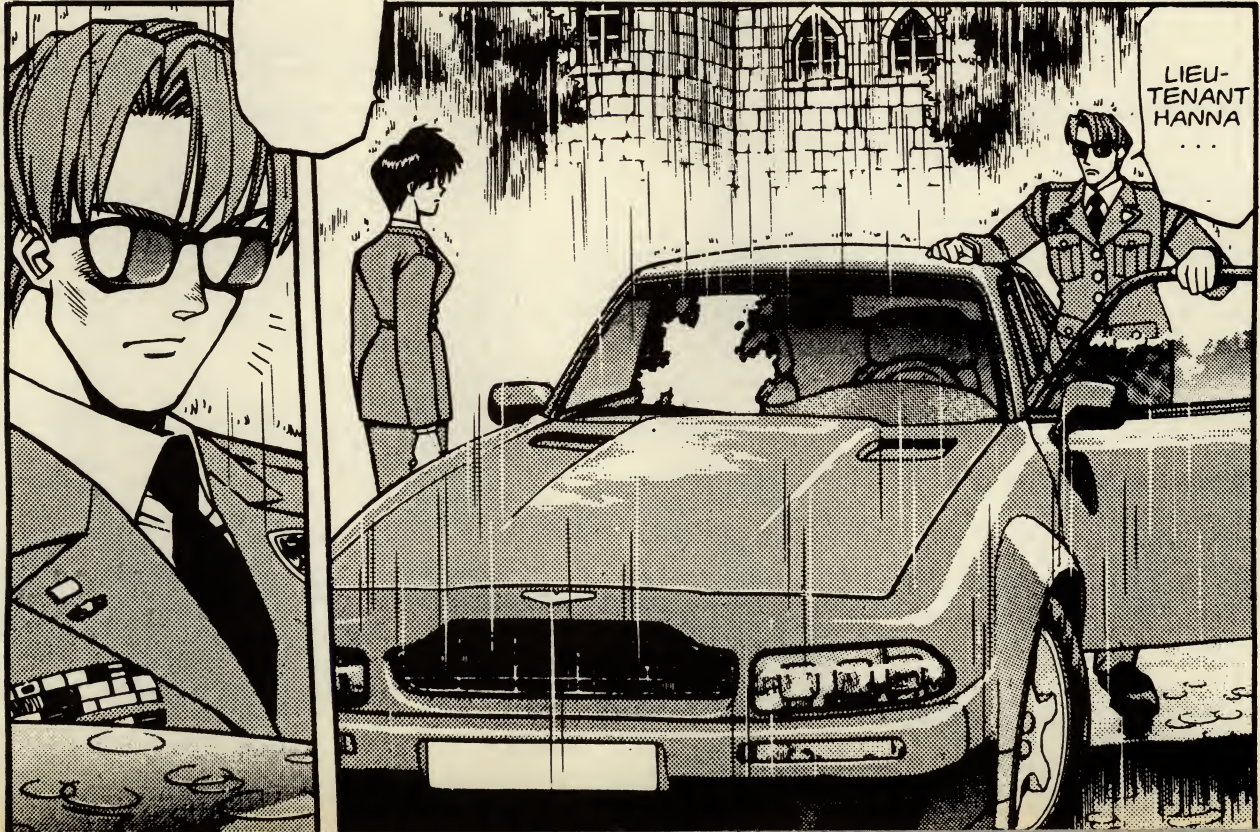
SHAH

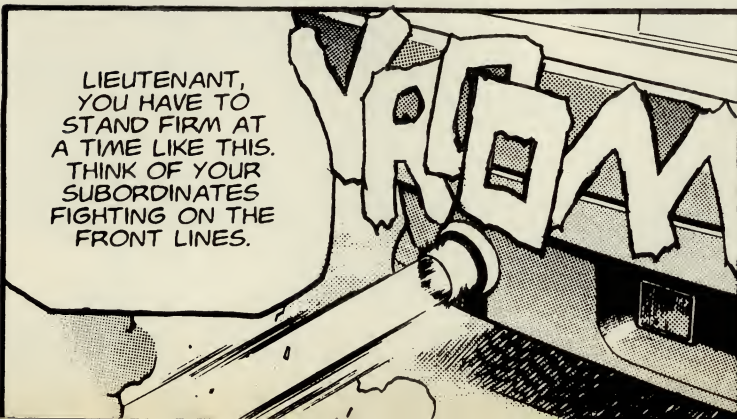
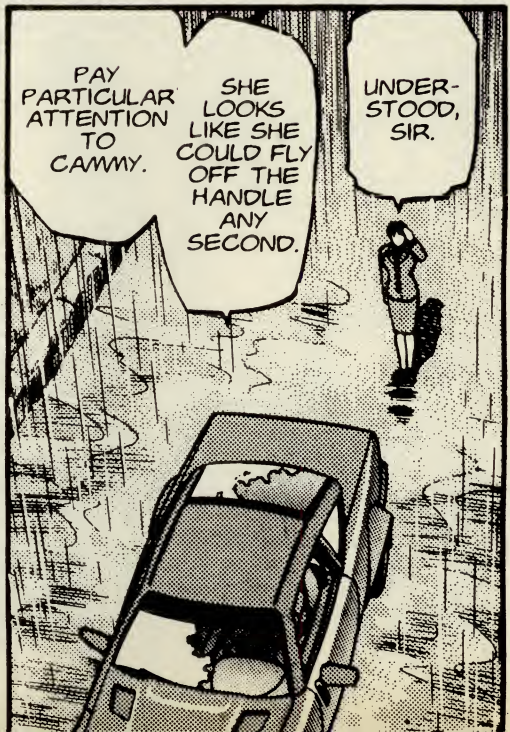
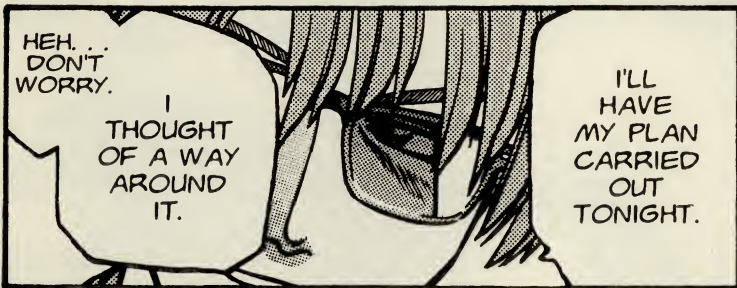
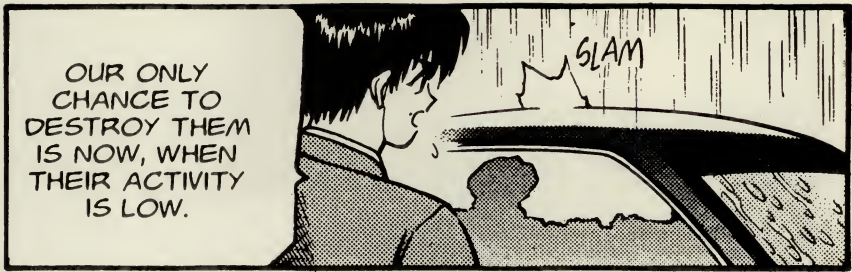
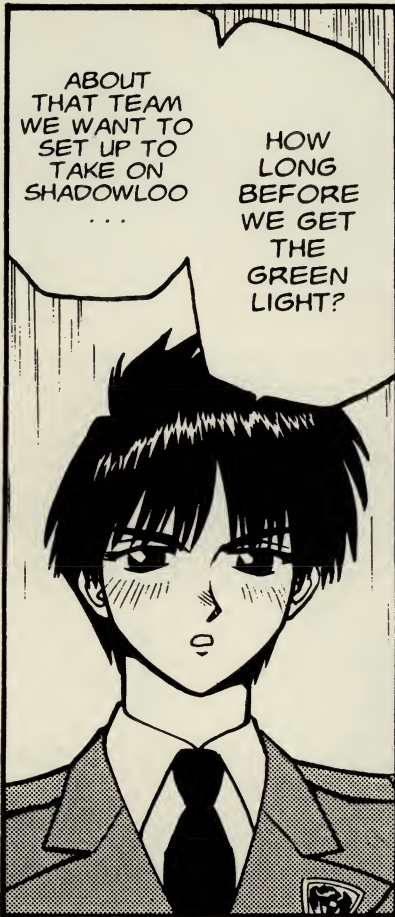
One month later

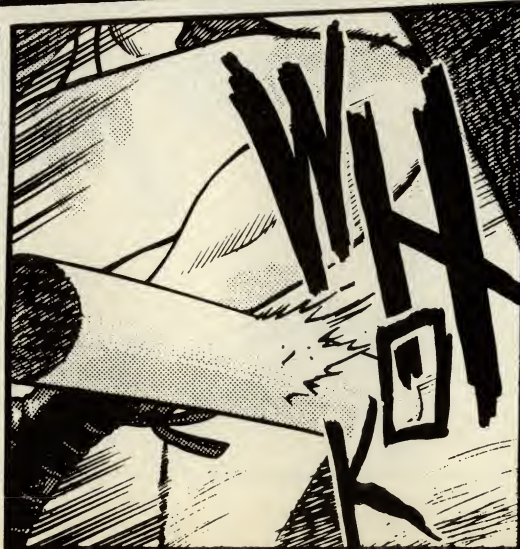
M16
Secret
Base

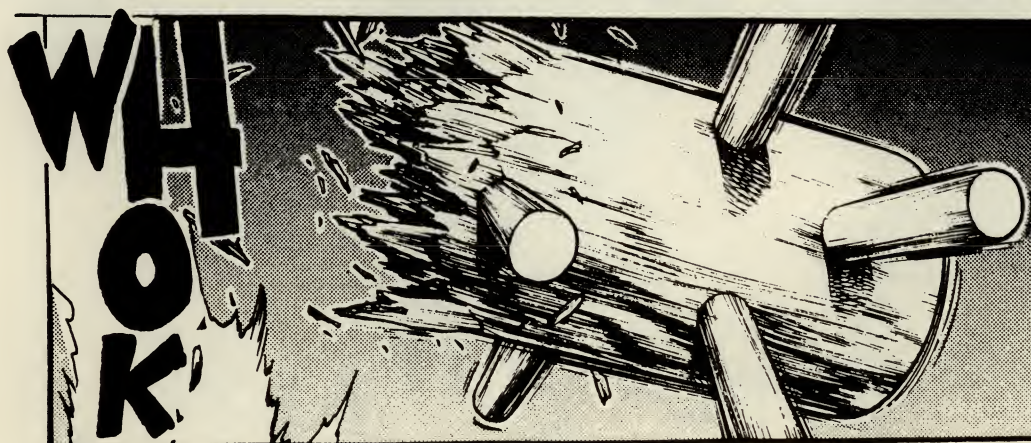
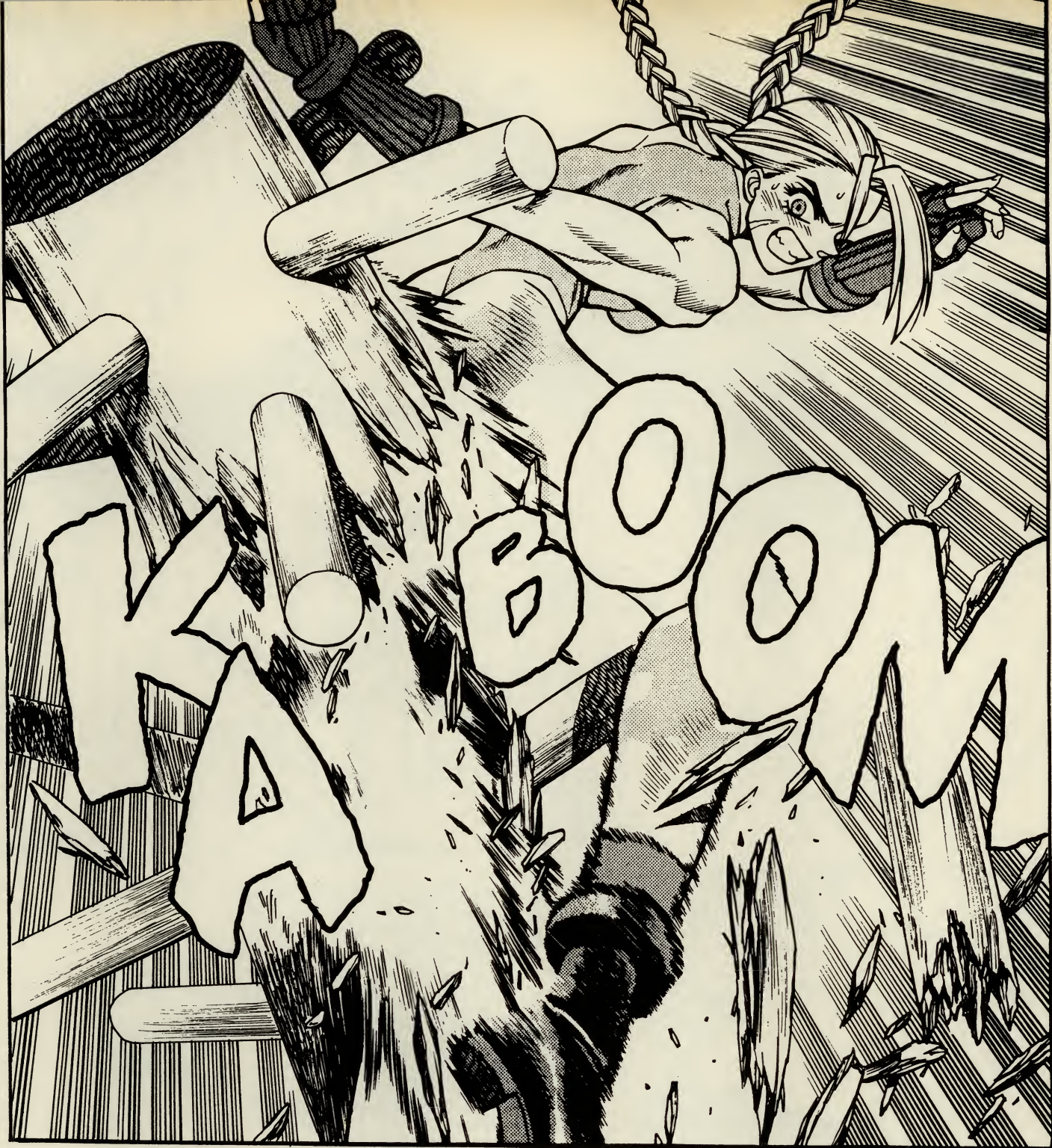
COLONEL
WOLFMAN
!

LIEU-
TENANT
HANNA
...

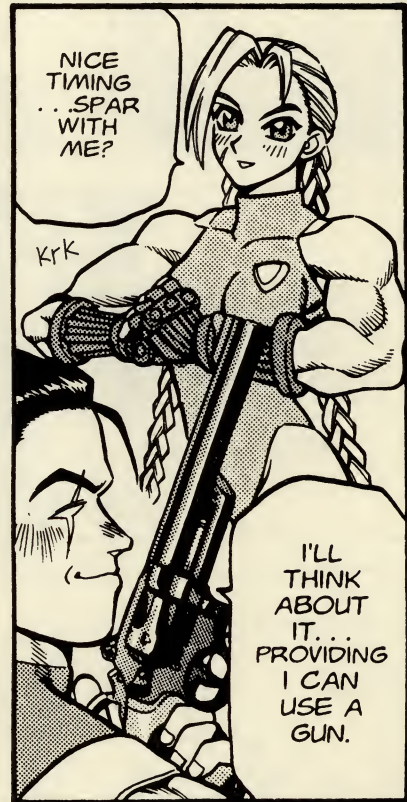
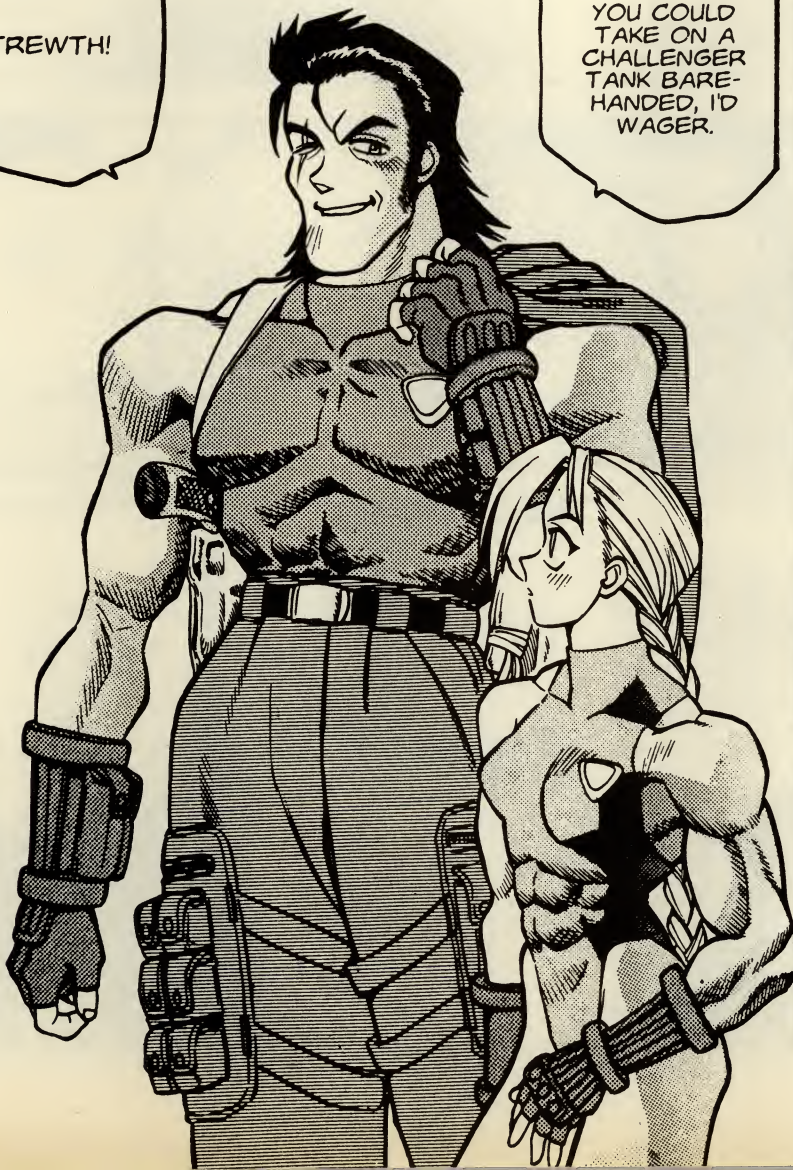
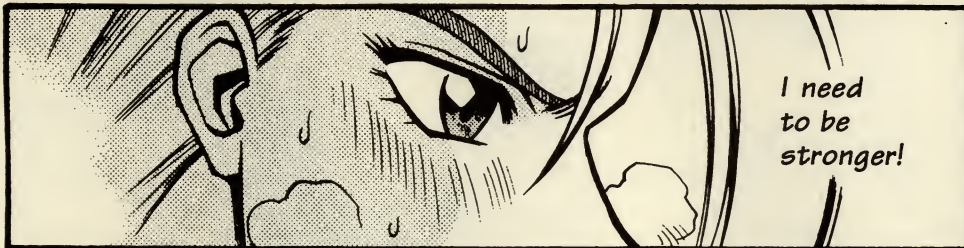
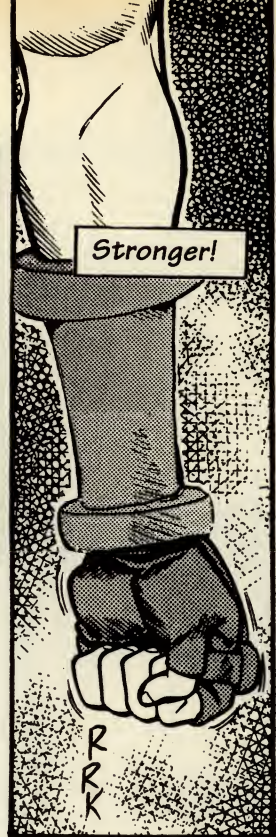
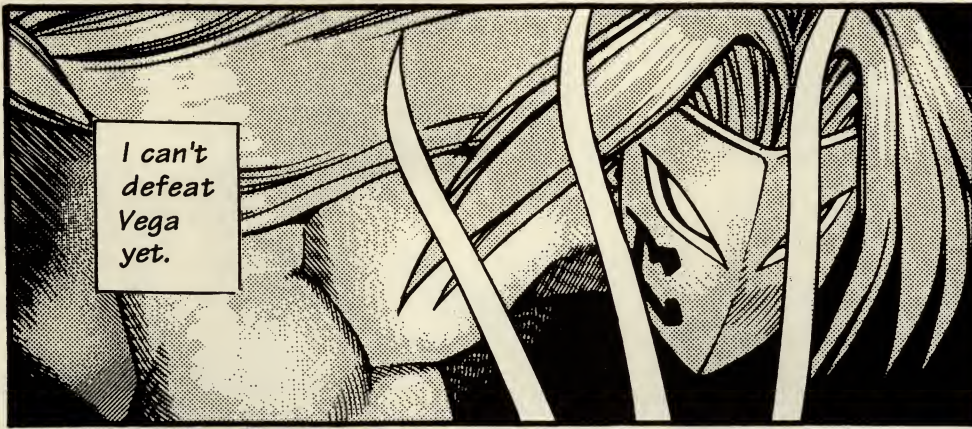


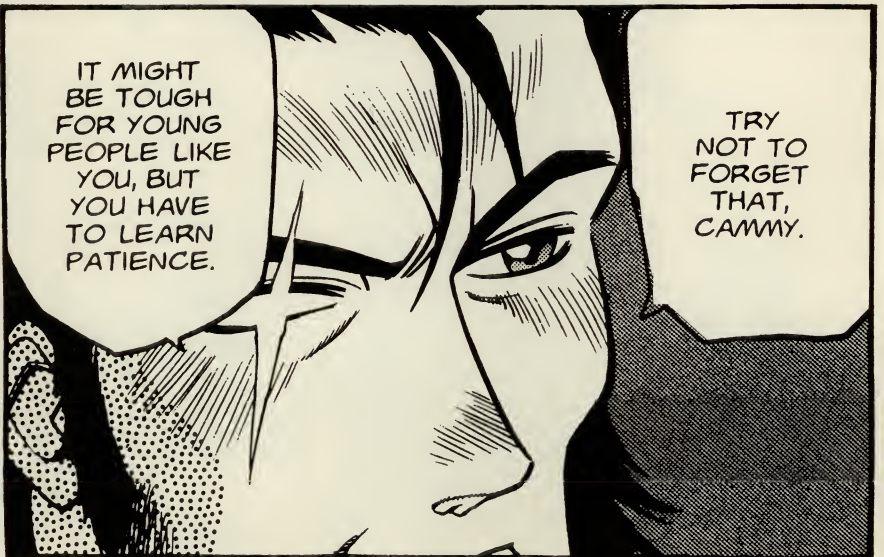
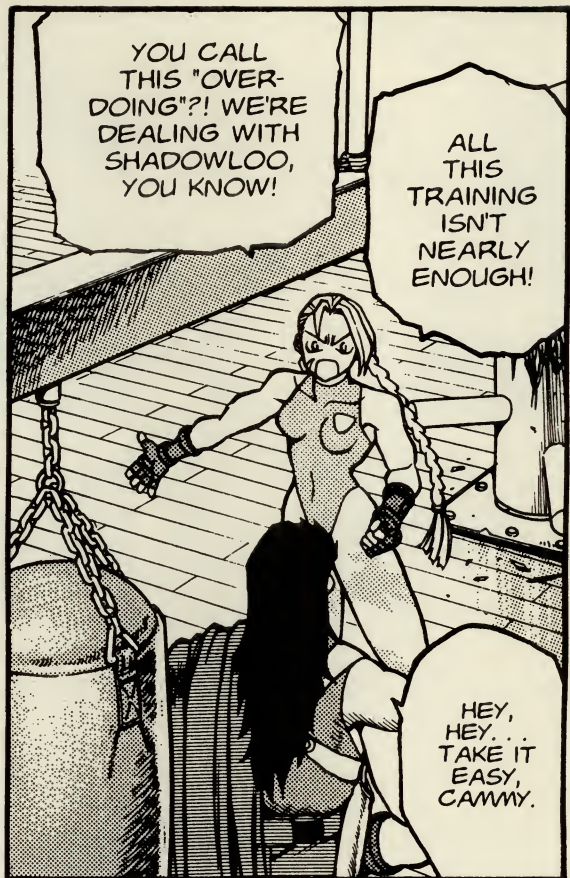
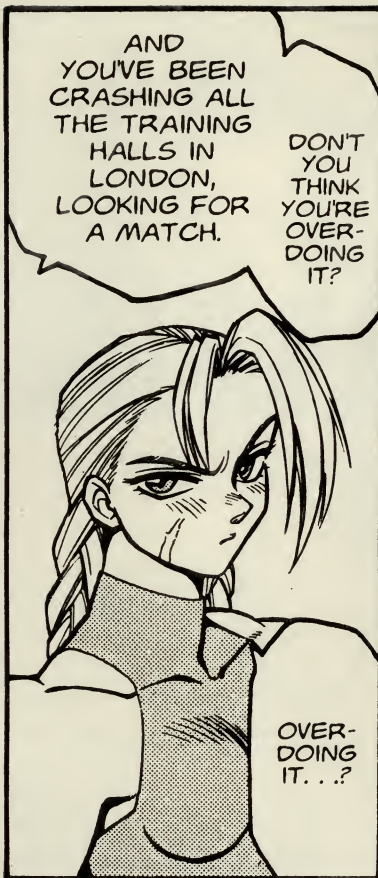






It's
not
enough
...!

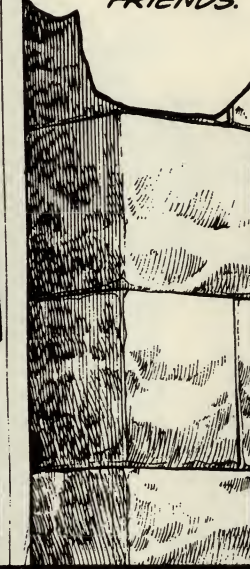




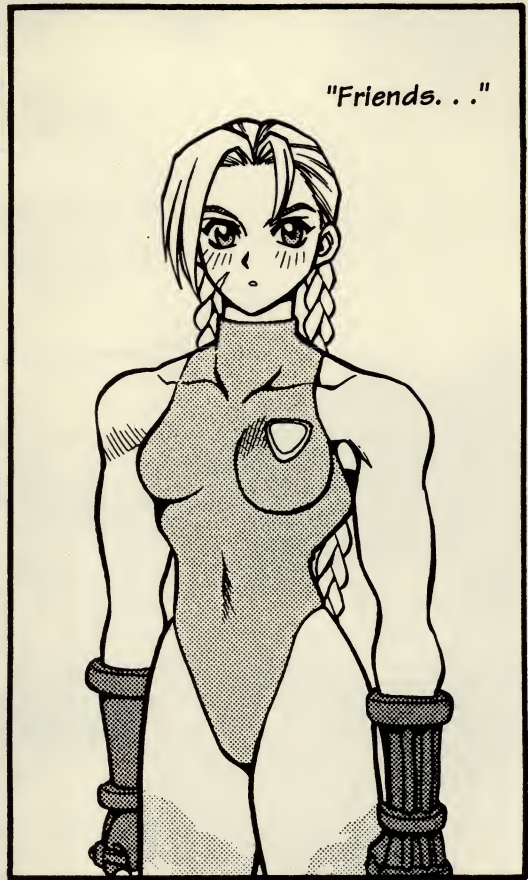
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE FIGHTING SHADOWLOO.



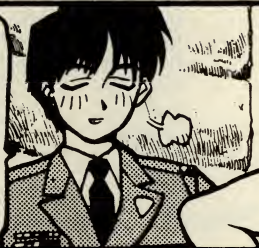
COLONEL WOLFMAN, THE LIEUTENANT ... AND THE TEAM... YOUR FRIENDS.



"Friends..."



THERE'S NO NEED FOR ME TO ADD ANYTHING.



YOU'VE REALLY GOT A WAY WITH WORDS ... SOMETIMES.

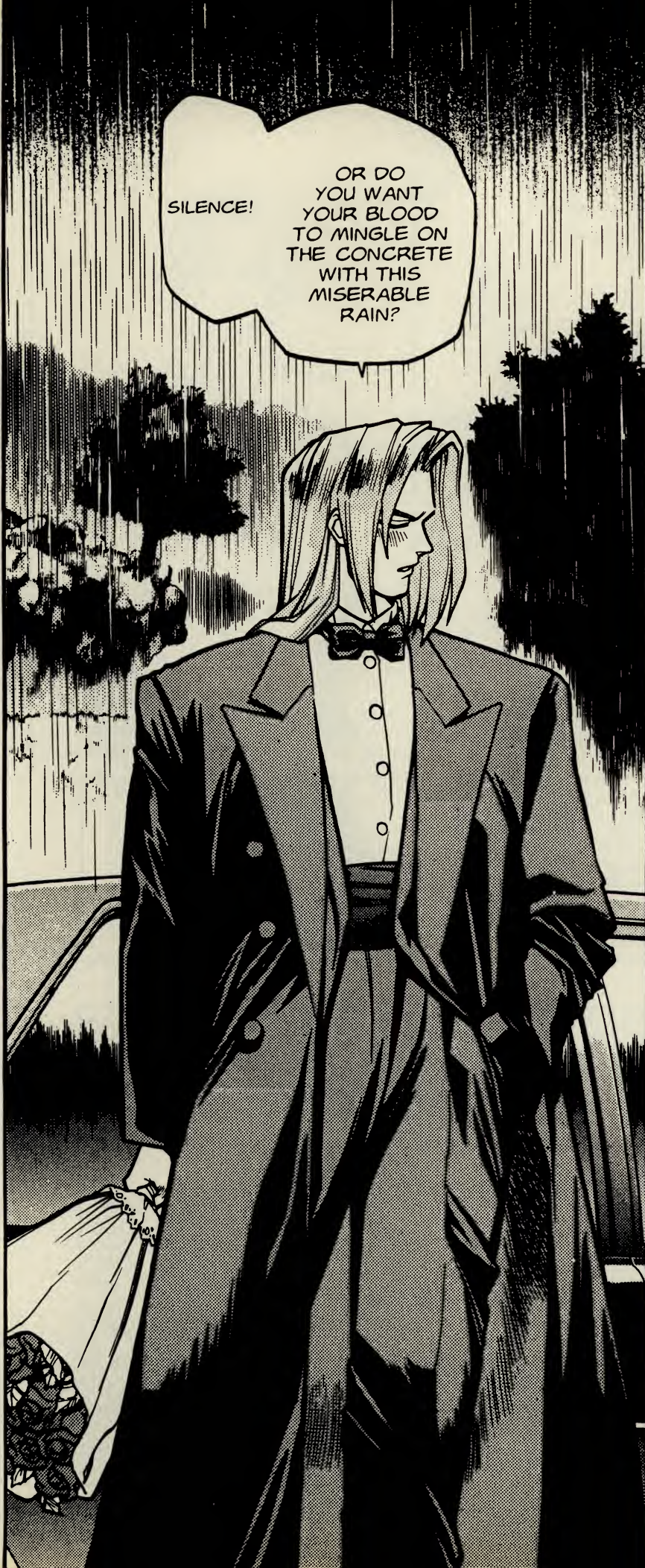


SHUT UP! LEAVE ME ALONE!



HEY, THIS IS MILITARY PROPERTY! MOVE YOUR CAR RIGHT NOW!



A black and white manga-style illustration of a man with long, straight hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a dark bow tie. He is standing in the rain, looking slightly to his right with a serious expression. The background is filled with vertical lines representing rain and dark silhouettes of trees.

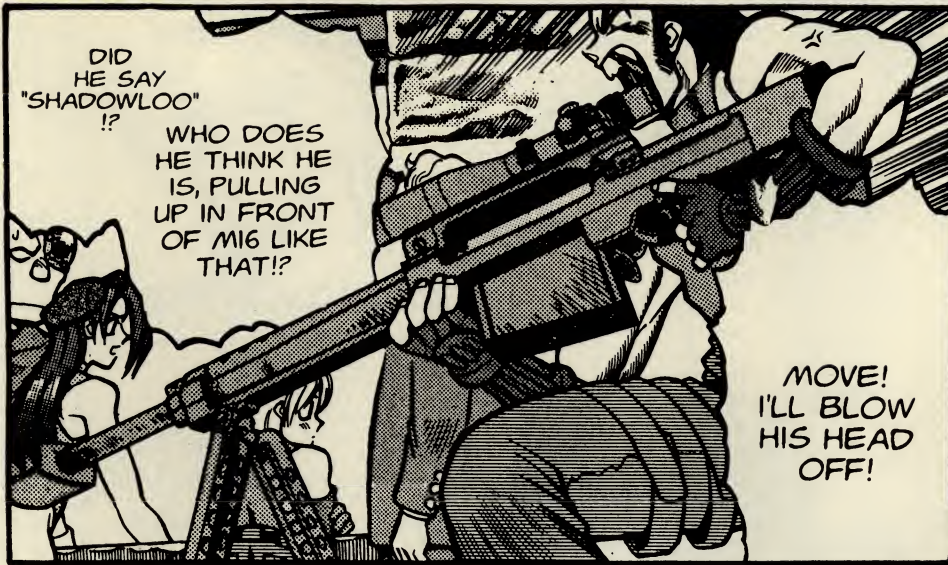
SILENCE!

OR DO
YOU WANT
YOUR BLOOD
TO MINGLE ON
THE CONCRETE
WITH THIS
MISERABLE
RAIN?

A close-up, black and white manga-style illustration of the man's face. He has a serious, intense expression with a slight frown. He is wearing a white dress shirt and a dark bow tie. The background is plain white.

I AM
INVITING MISS
CAMMY TO
A DINNER
PARTY AT
SHADOWLOO.

TELL HER
THAT *VEGA*
HAS COME
TO ESCORT
HER.



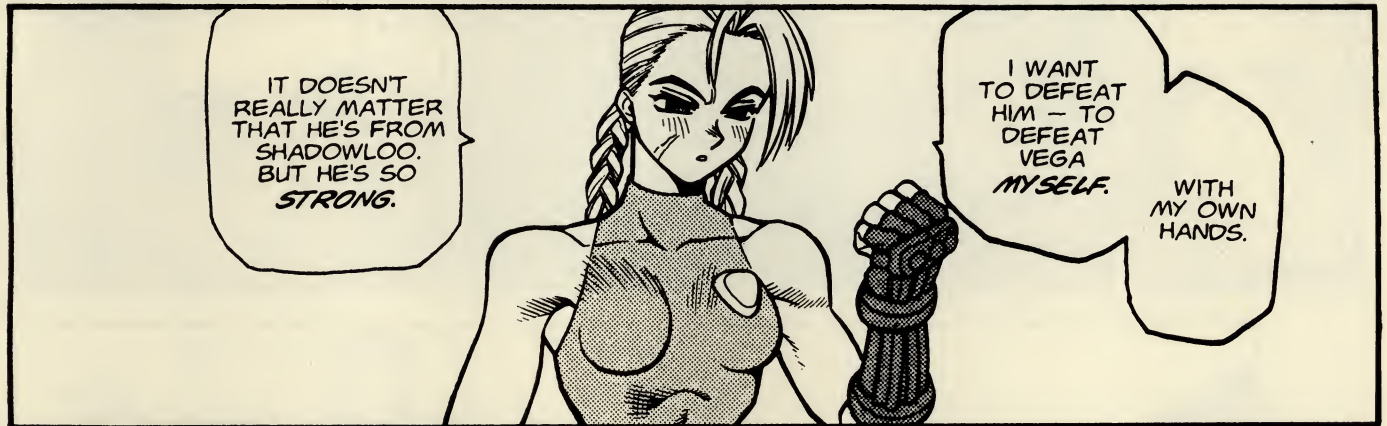
DID HE SAY "SHADOWLOO" !?

WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS, PULLING UP IN FRONT OF M16 LIKE THAT!?

MOVE! I'LL BLOW HIS HEAD OFF!



WAIT! HOLD ON!



IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER THAT HE'S FROM SHADOWLOO. BUT HE'S SO STRONG.

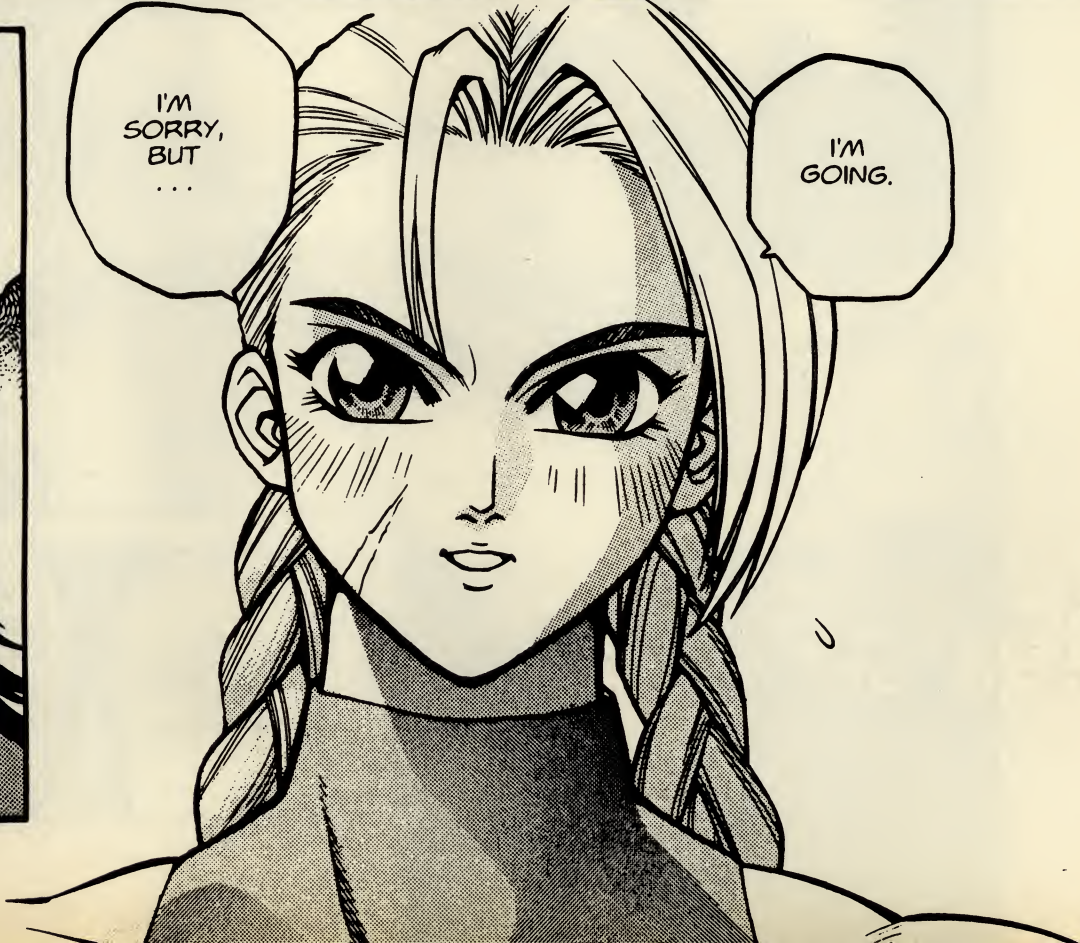
I WANT TO DEFEAT HIM - TO DEFEAT VEGA MYSELF. WITH MY OWN HANDS.

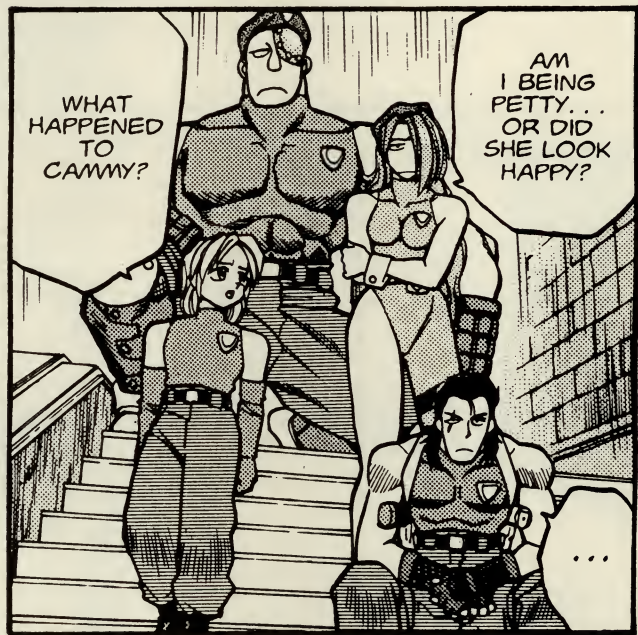
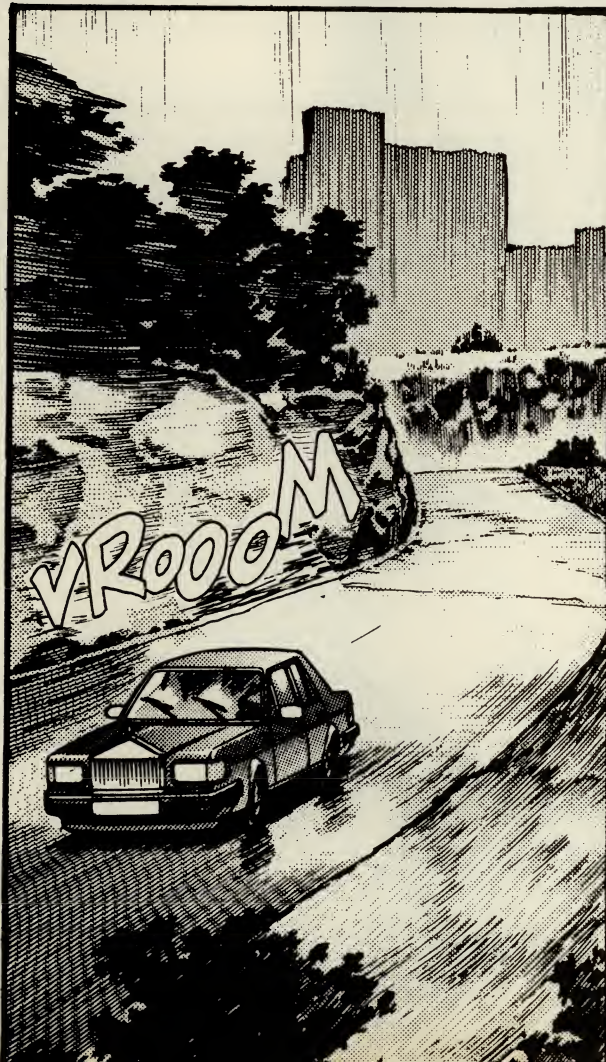
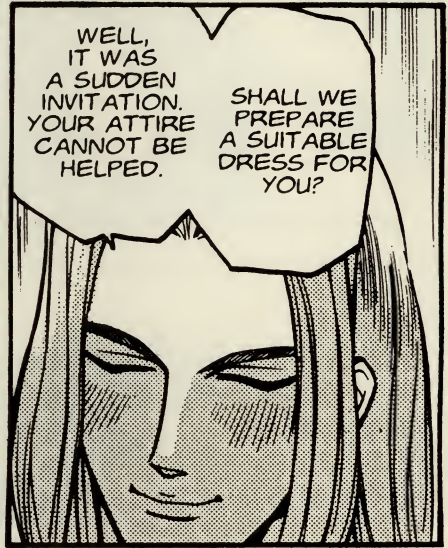
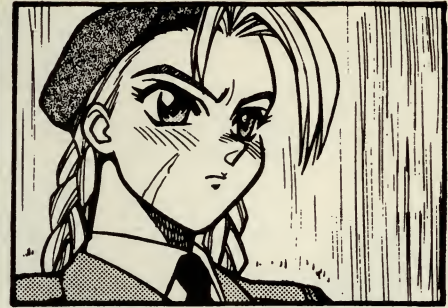
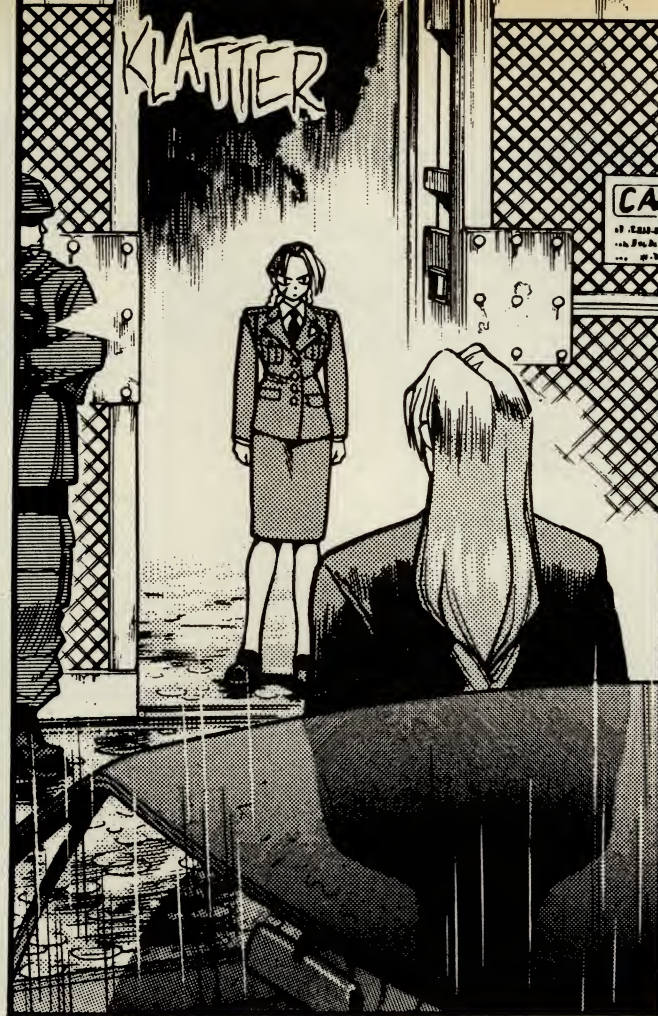


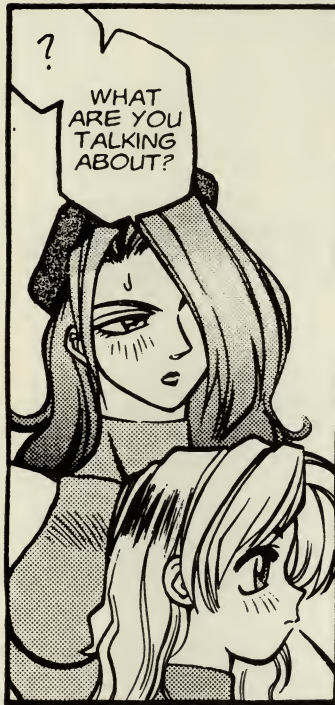
CAWMY, YOU'RE NOT ...!?

I'M SORRY, BUT ...

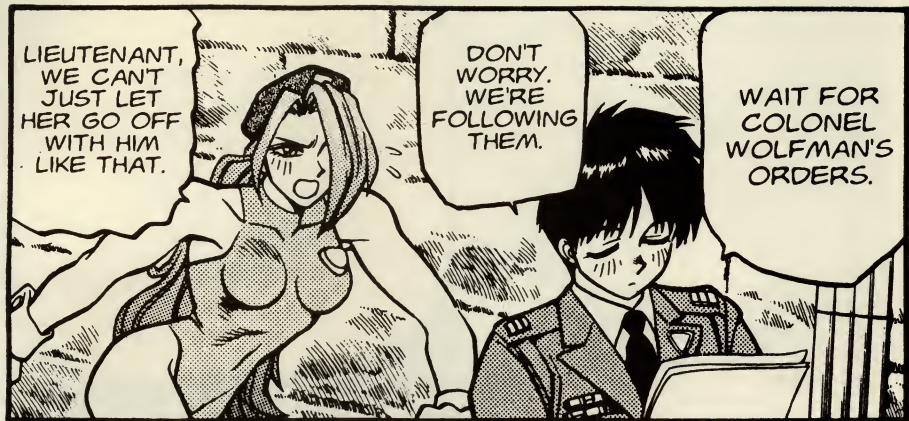
I'M GOING.







?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



LIEUTENANT, WE CAN'T JUST LET HER GO OFF WITH HIM LIKE THAT.

DON'T WORRY. WE'RE FOLLOWING THEM.

WAIT FOR COLONEL WOLFMAN'S ORDERS.

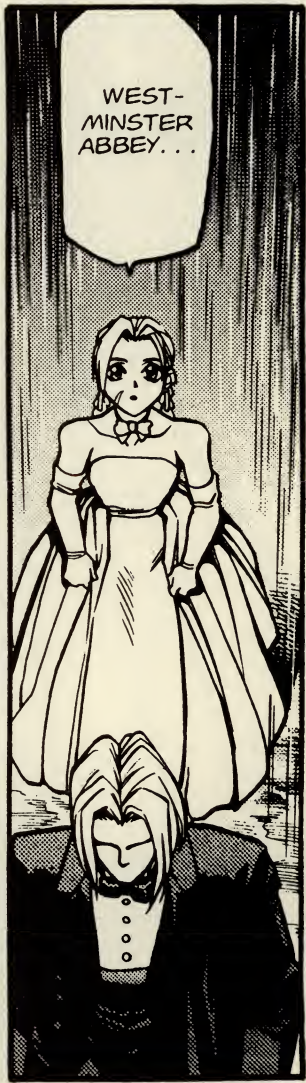


WH-WHAT IS THIS?!

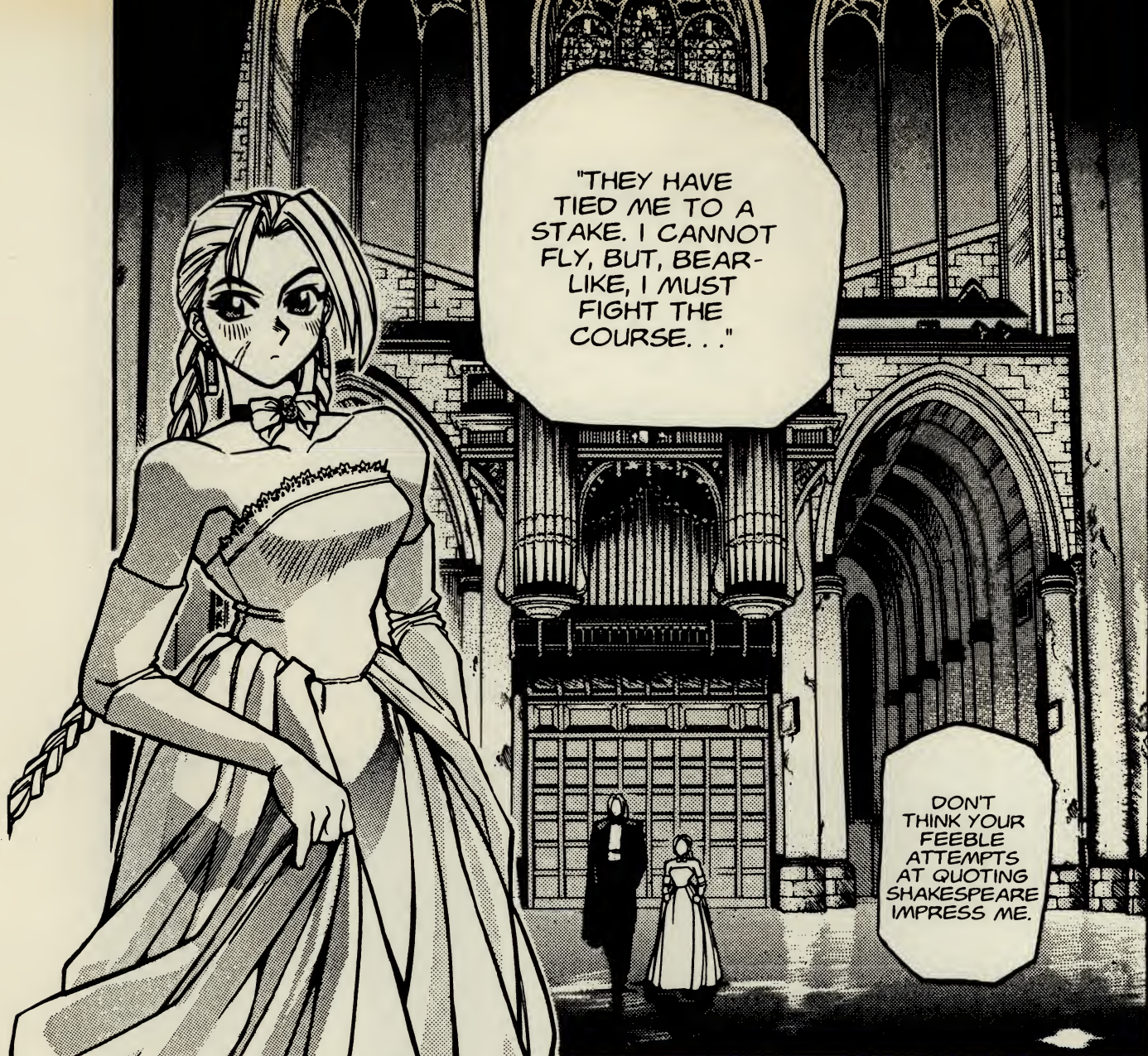
HOW CAN YOU BE SO CALM WHEN CAMMY'S IN DANGER!?



SHAAH

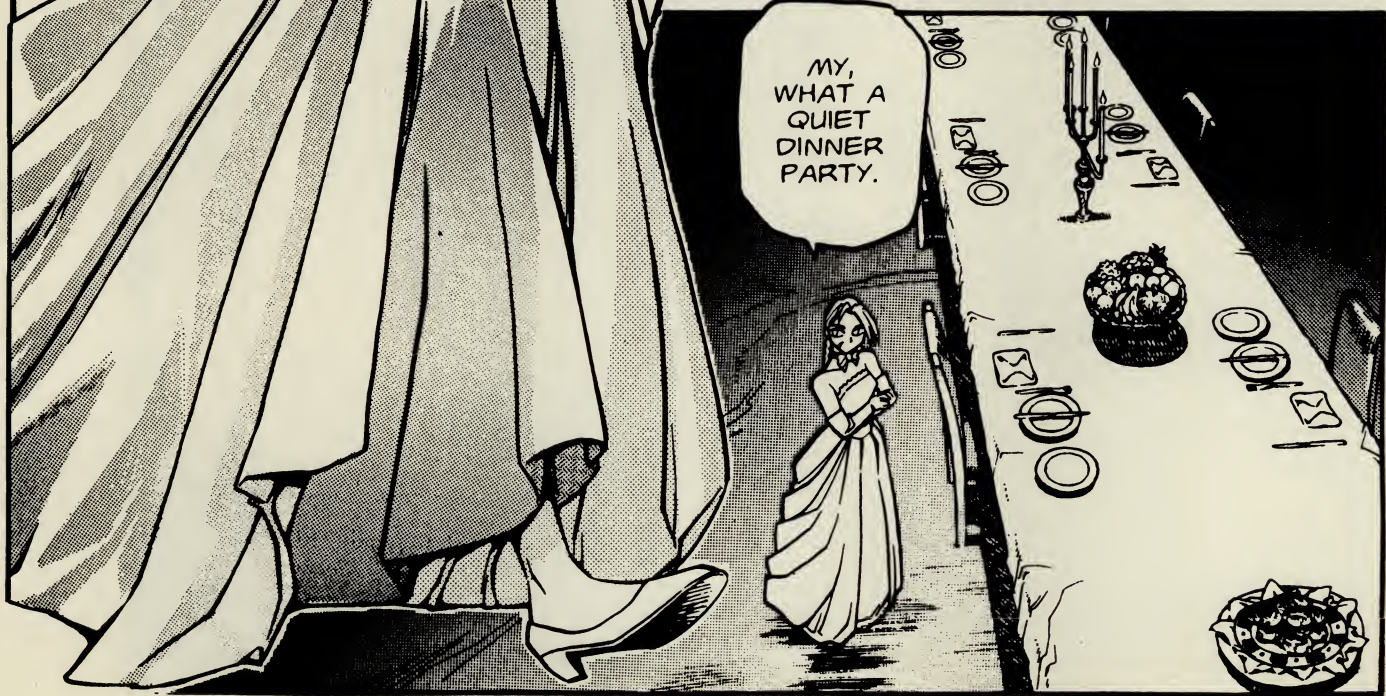


WEST-MINSTER ABBEY...

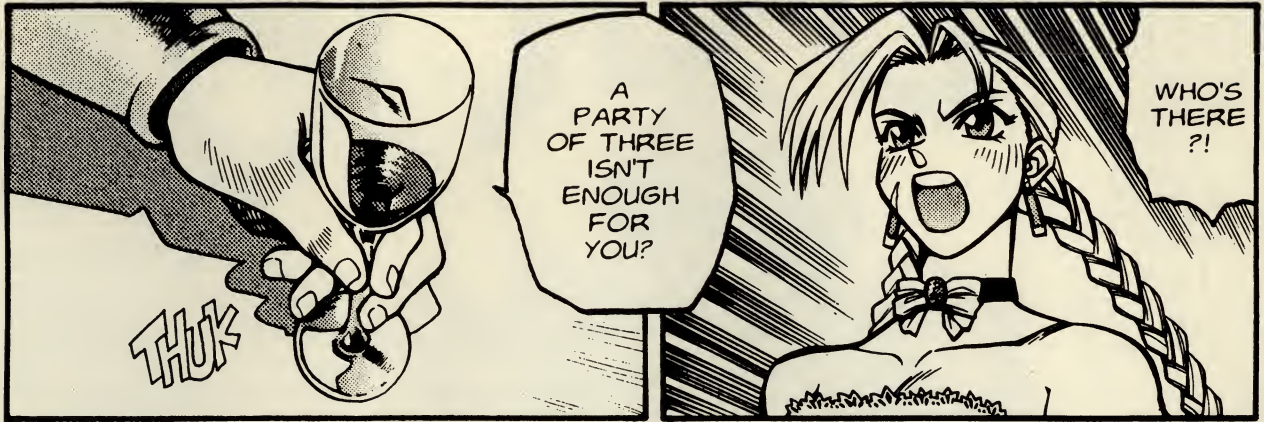


"THEY HAVE TIED ME TO A STAKE. I CANNOT FLY, BUT, BEAR-LIKE, I MUST FIGHT THE COURSE..."

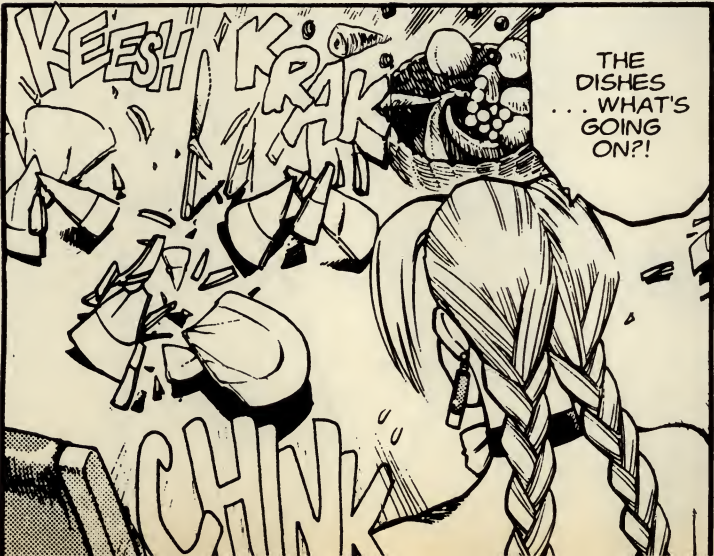
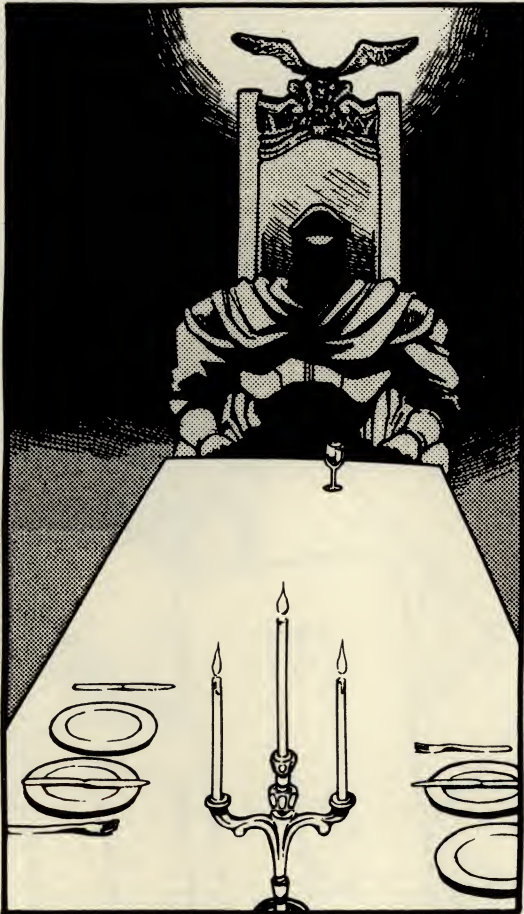
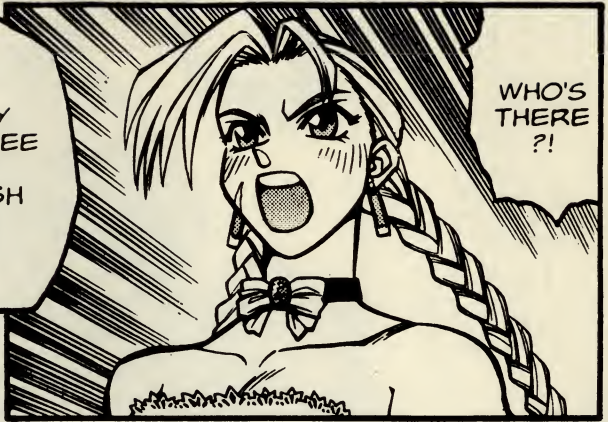
DONT THINK YOUR FEEBLE ATTEMPTS AT QUOTING SHAKESPEARE IMPRESS ME.



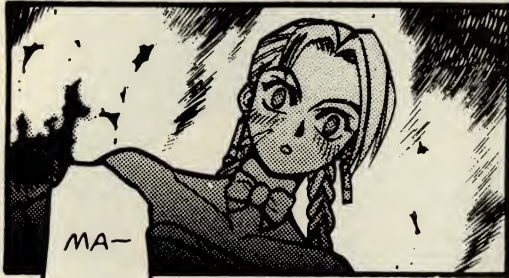
MY, WHAT A QUIET DINNER PARTY.



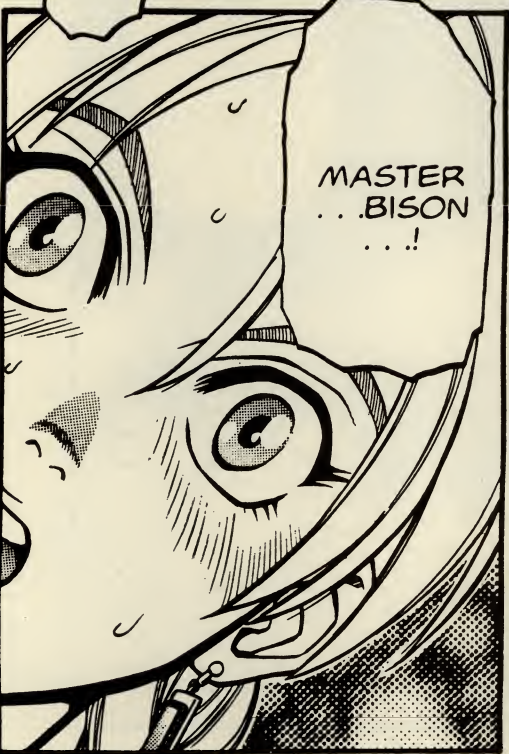
A PARTY OF THREE ISN'T ENOUGH FOR YOU?







MA-

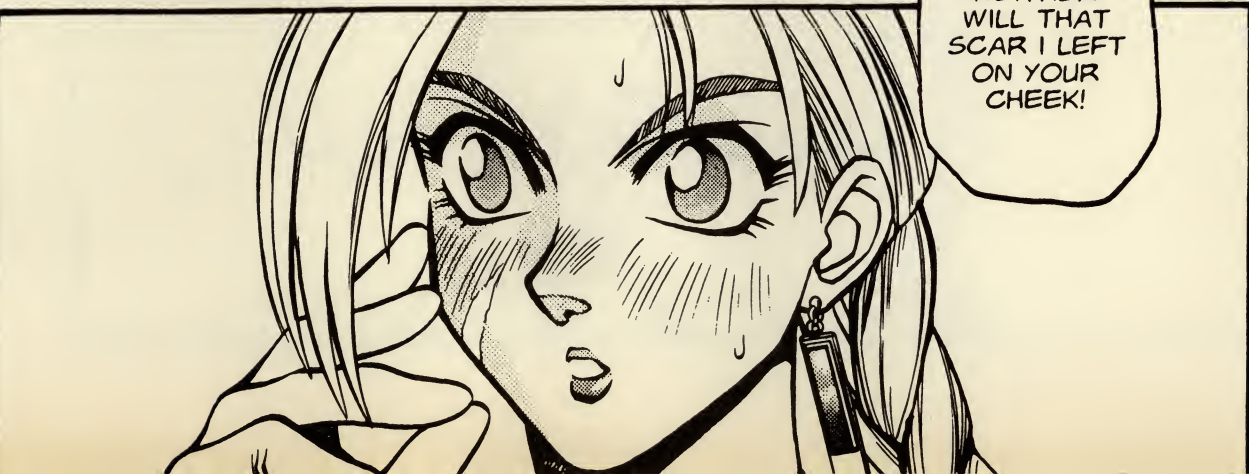


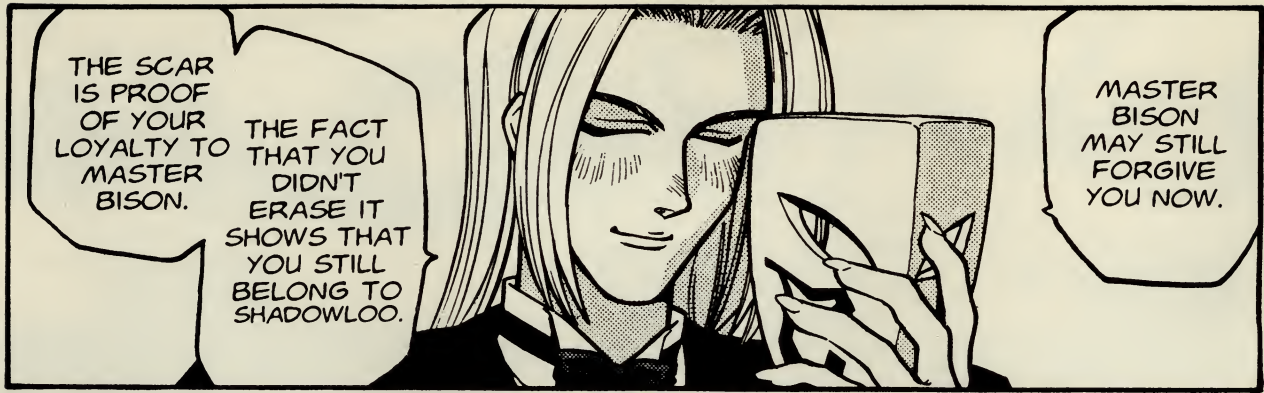
MASTER
... BISON
...!



YOU MAY
HAVE LOST YOUR
MEMORY, BUT MY
NAME IS CARVED
DEEP IN YOUR
MIND AND WILL
NEVER FADE
...

AND
NEITHER
WILL THAT
SCAR I LEFT
ON YOUR
CHEEK!

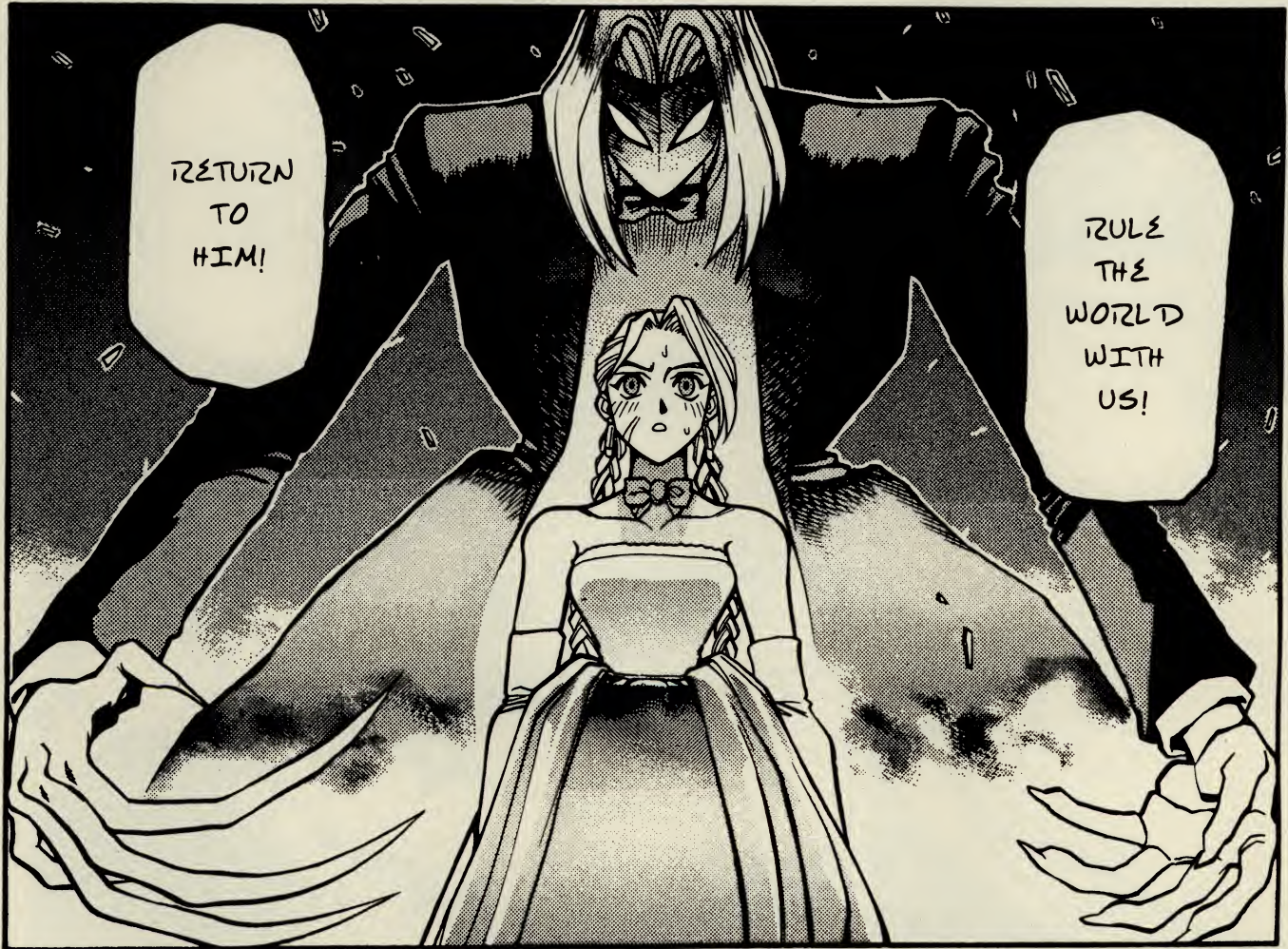




THE SCAR IS PROOF OF YOUR LOYALTY TO MASTER BISON.

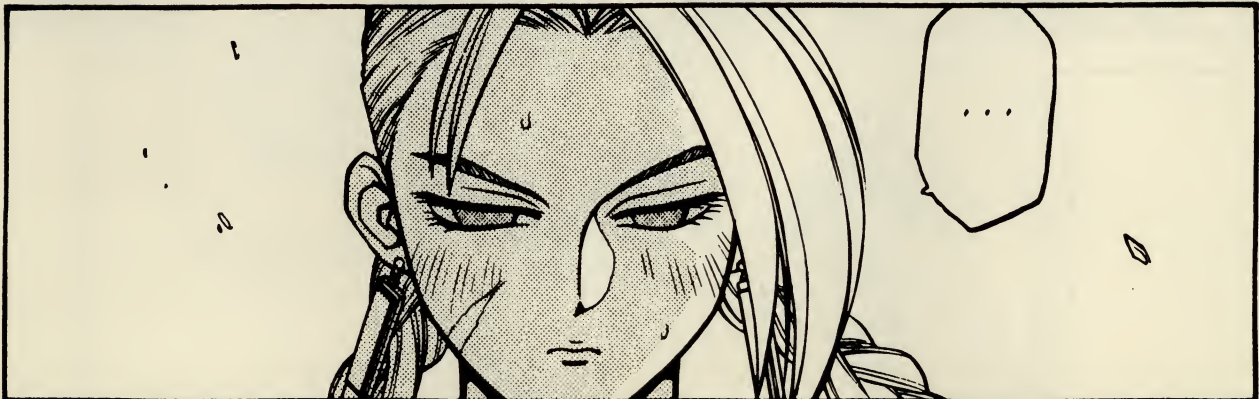
THE FACT THAT YOU DIDN'T ERASE IT SHOWS THAT YOU STILL BELONG TO SHADOWLOO.

MASTER BISON MAY STILL FORGIVE YOU NOW.

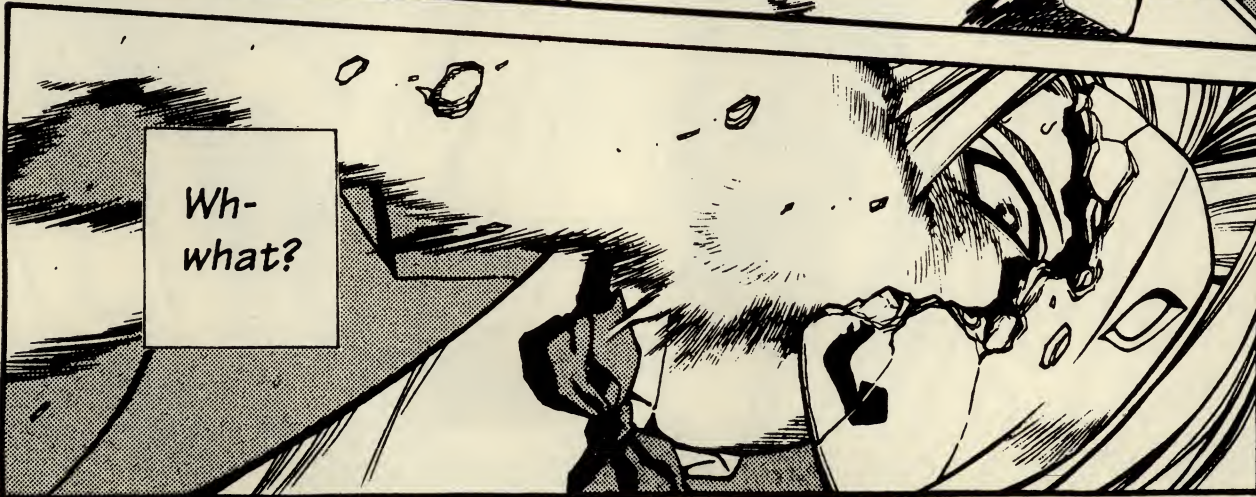


RETURN TO HIM!

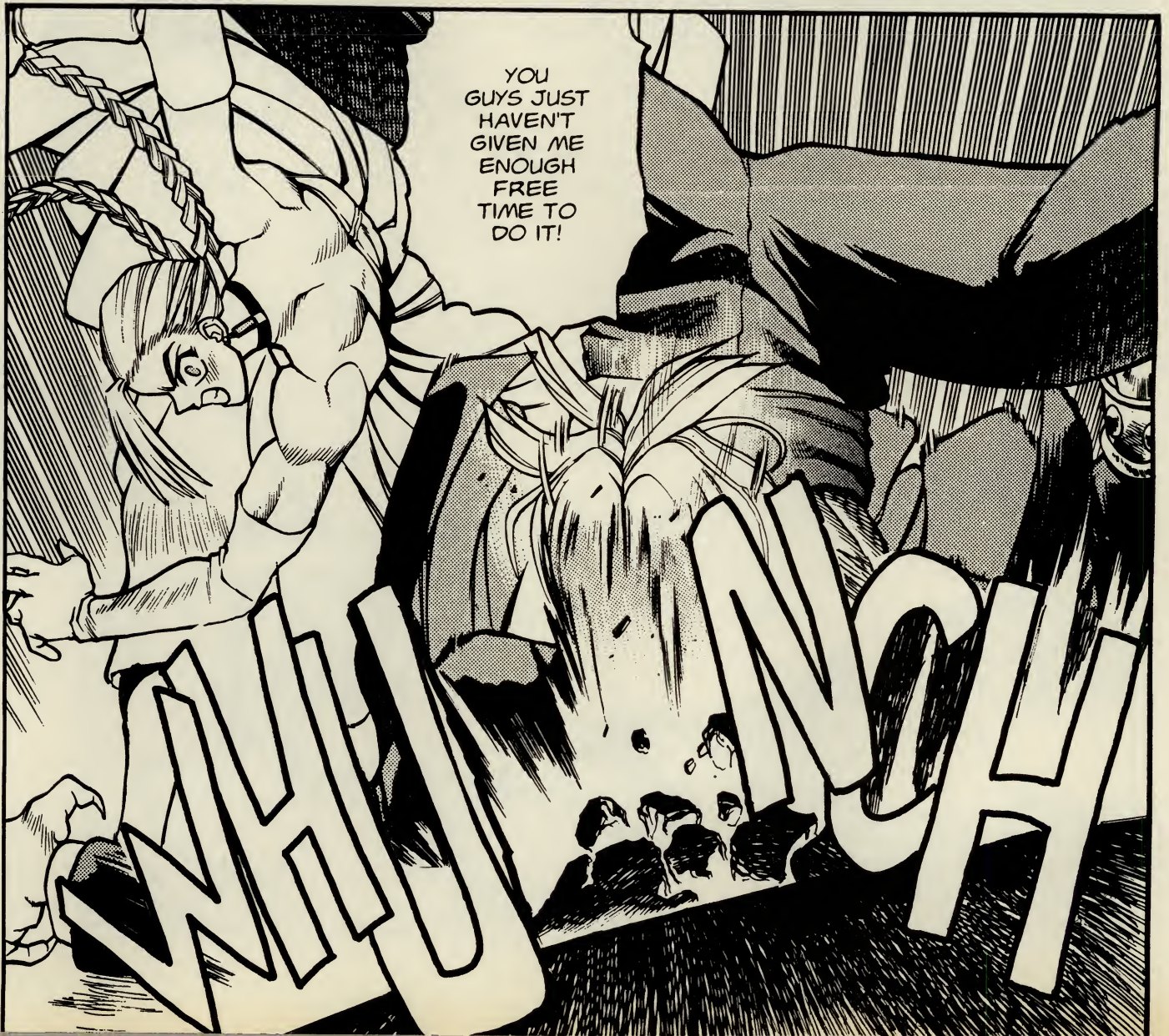
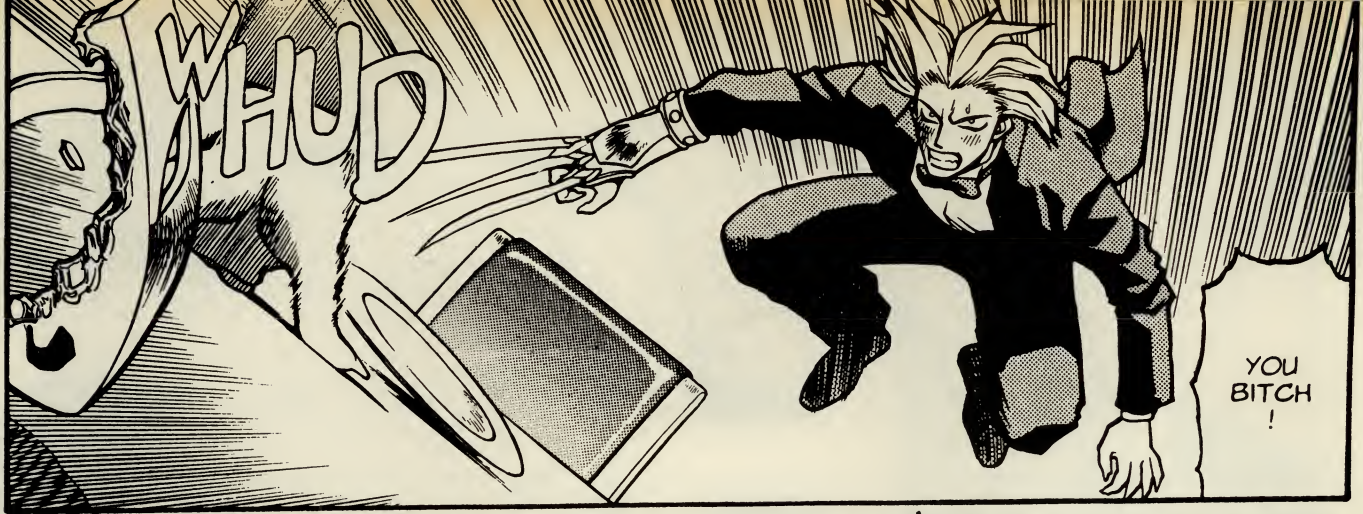
RULE THE WORLD WITH US!

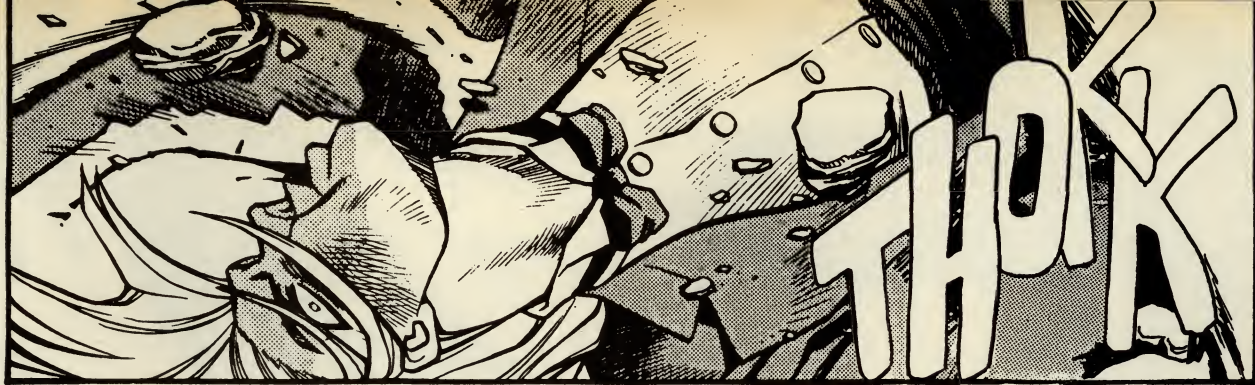


...



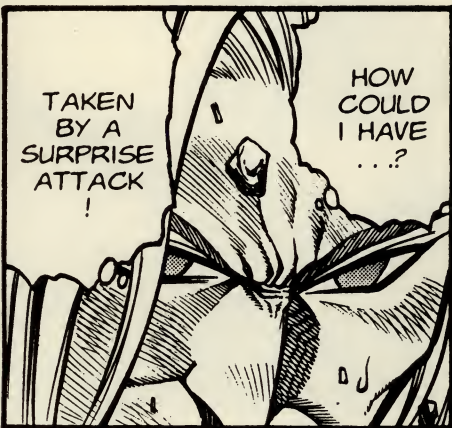
Wh-
what?





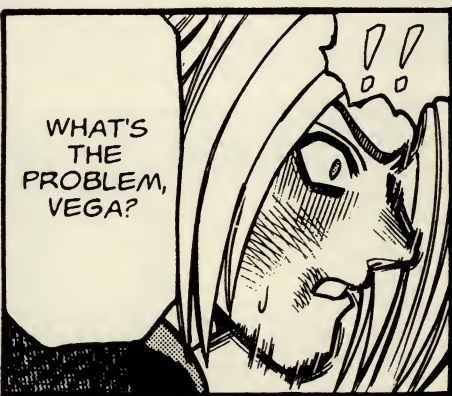
HAH HAH!
ALL THAT
TRAINING
IN THE
PAST MONTH
HASN'T
BEEN FOR
NOTHING!

UHN...
GAH!

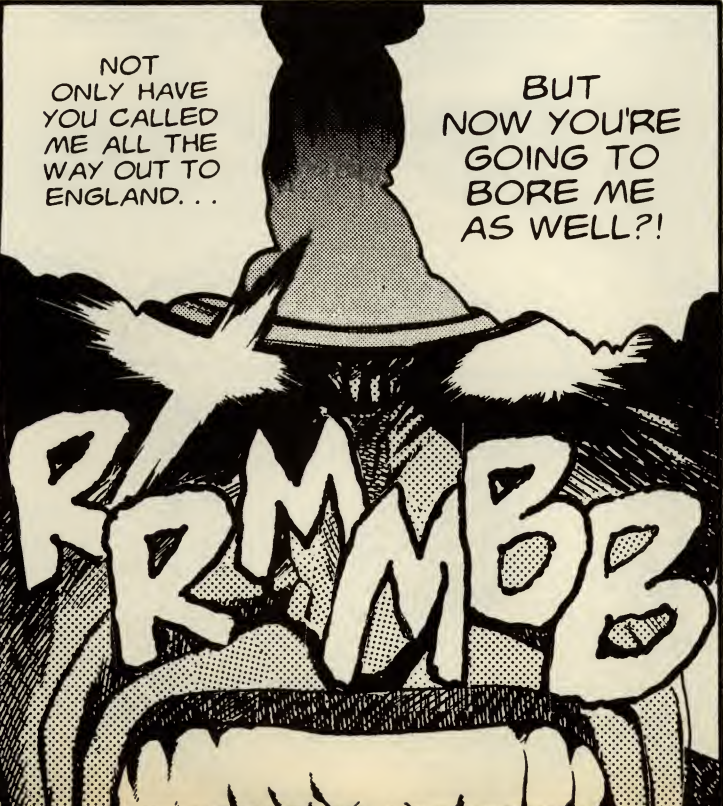


TAKEN
BY A
SURPRISE
ATTACK
!

HOW
COULD
I HAVE
...?!

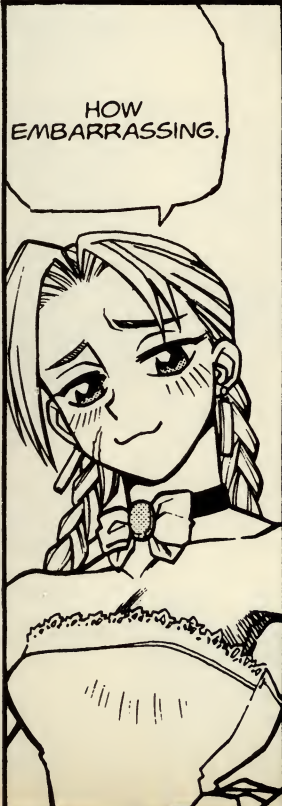


WHAT'S
THE
PROBLEM,
VEGA?



NOT
ONLY HAVE
YOU CALLED
ME ALL THE
WAY OUT TO
ENGLAND...

BUT
NOW YOU'RE
GOING TO
BORE ME
AS WELL?!

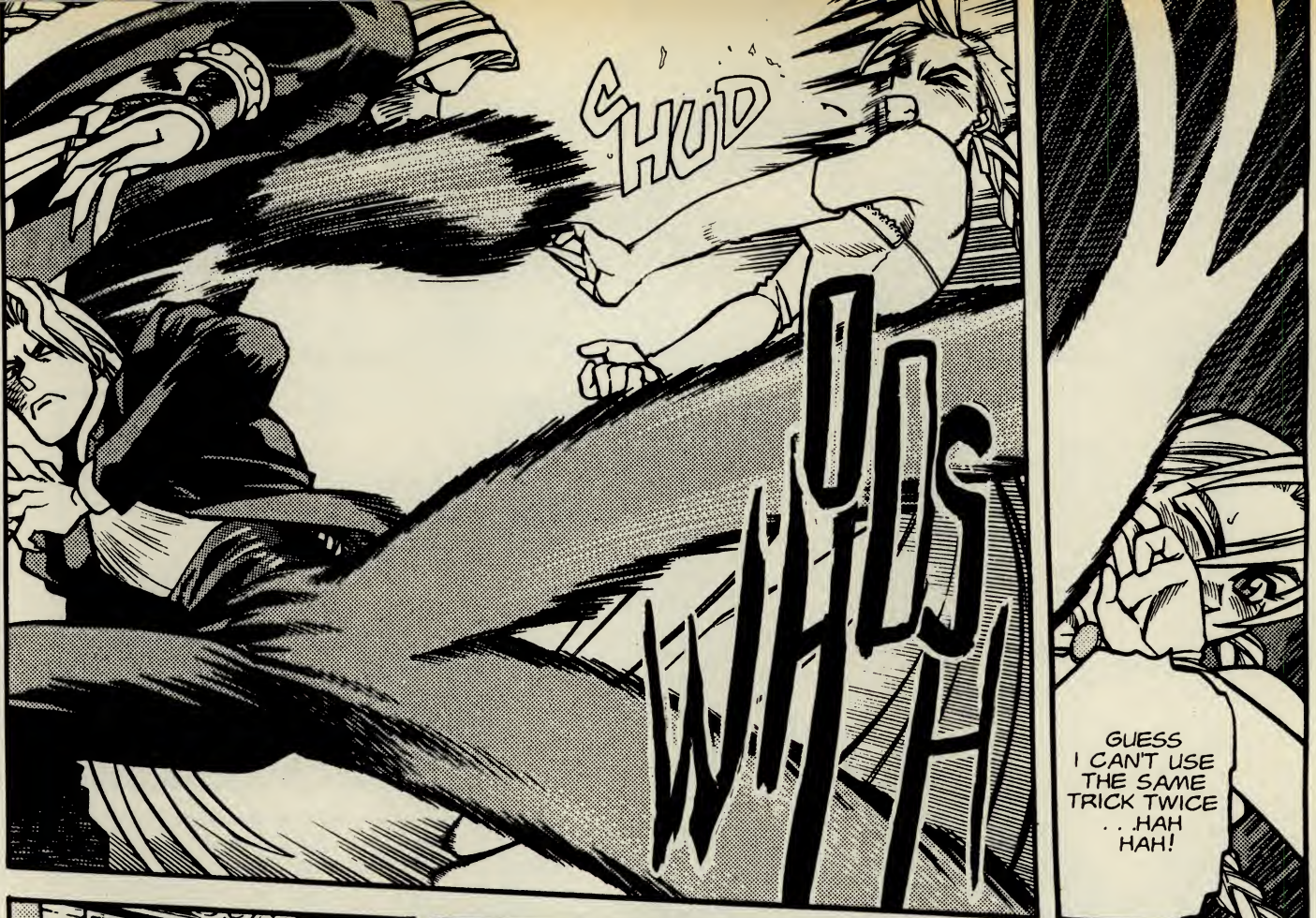


HOW
EMBARRASSING.

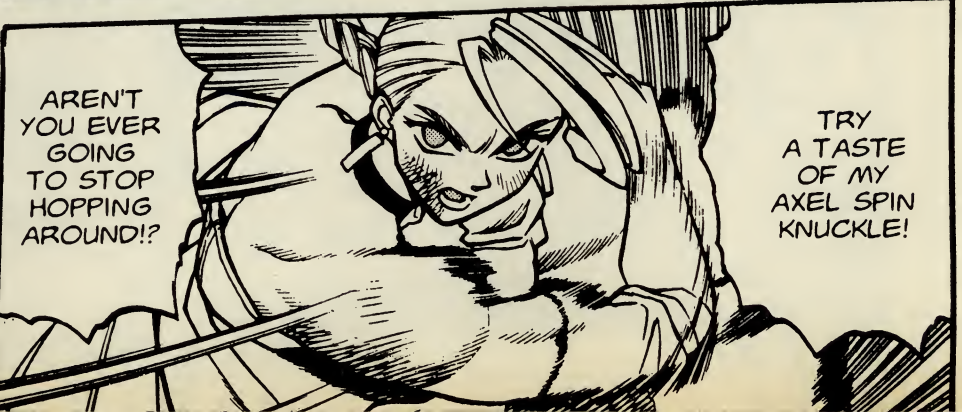
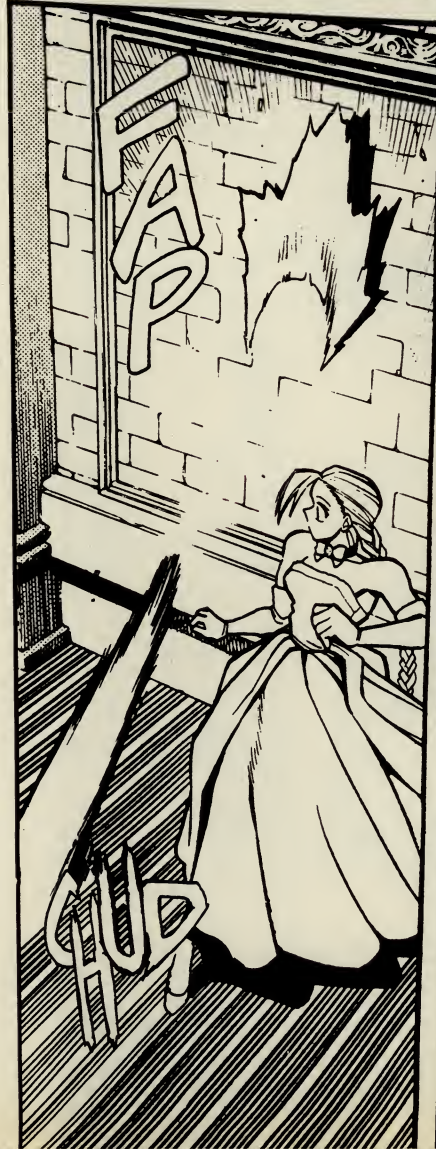


!!

BITCH
!

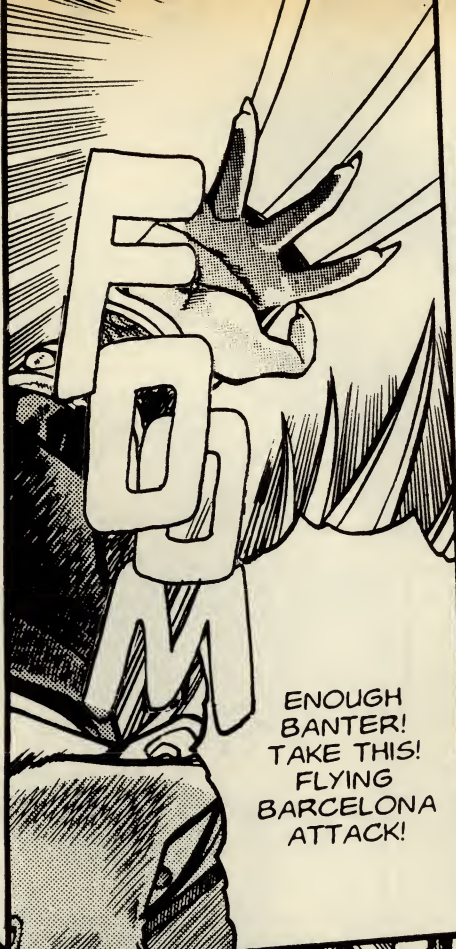


GUESS
I CAN'T USE
THE SAME
TRICK TWICE
... HAH
HAH!



AREN'T
YOU EVER
GOING
TO STOP
HOPPING
AROUND!?

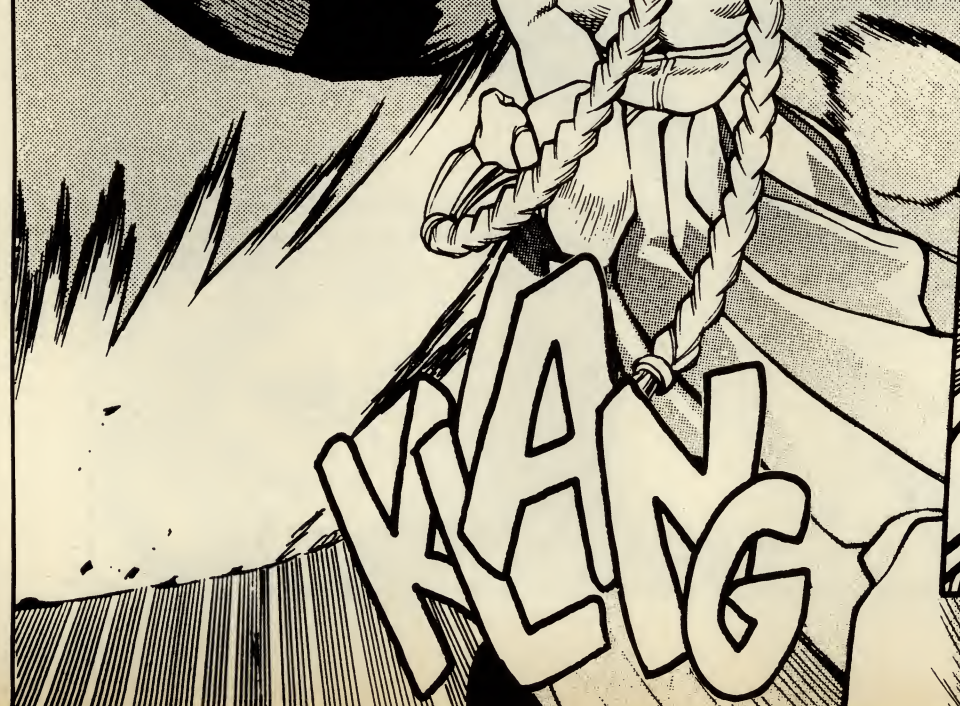
TRY
A TASTE
OF MY
AXEL SPIN
KNUCKLE!



ENOUGH
BANTER!
TAKE THIS!
FLYING
BARCELONA
ATTACK!

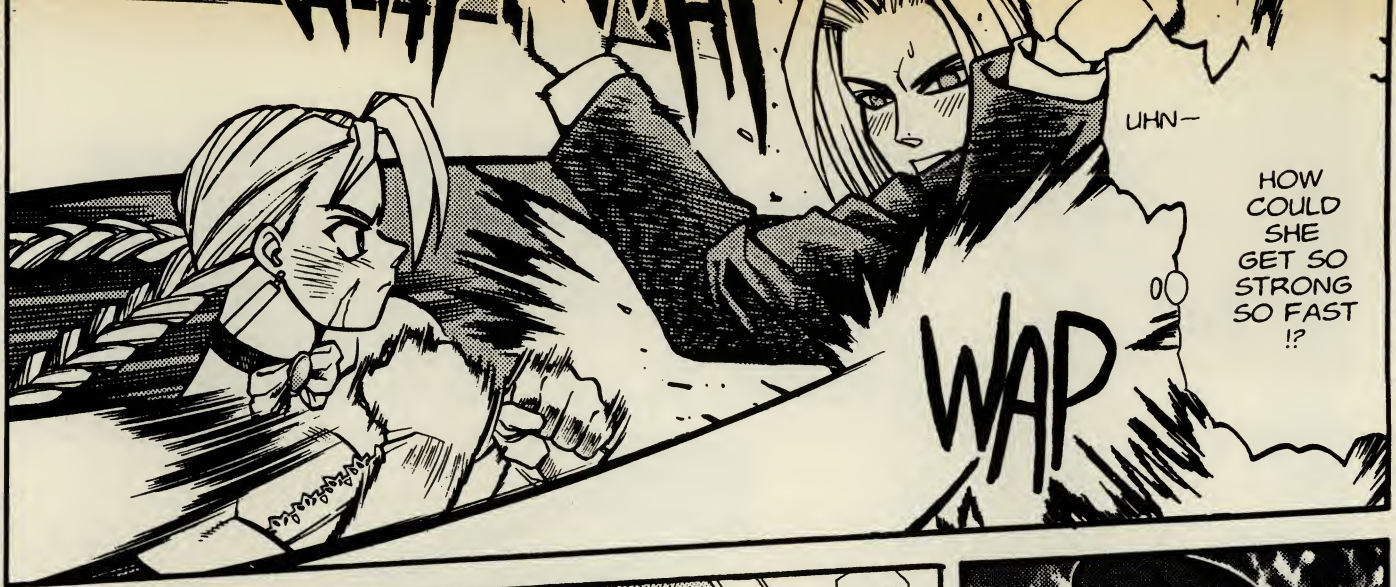


WHAT?
MISSED!



I CAN
DO THIS!
I'M NOT
ANY
SLOWER
THAN
HIM!

PREPARE
YOURSELF,
VEGA!



UHN-

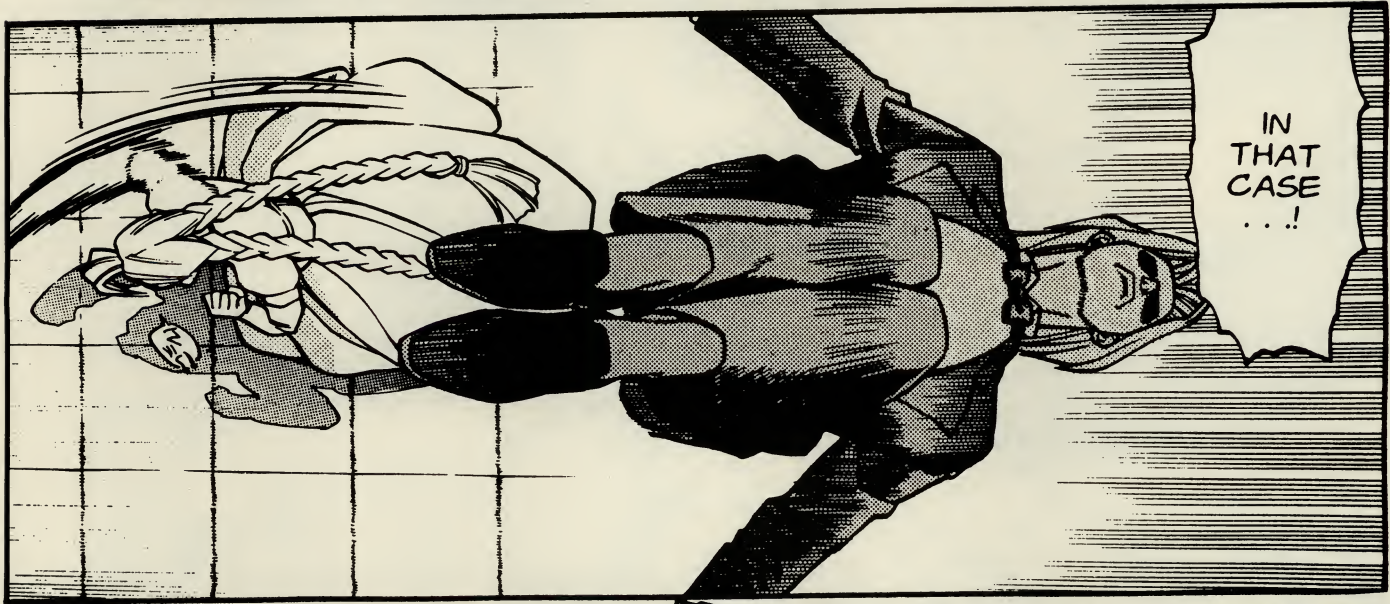
HOW
COULD
SHE
GET SO
STRONG
SO FAST
!?



HMM

IF SHE
RETURNS TO
SHADOWLOO,
MY POSITION
WILL BE
JEOPARDIZED
...

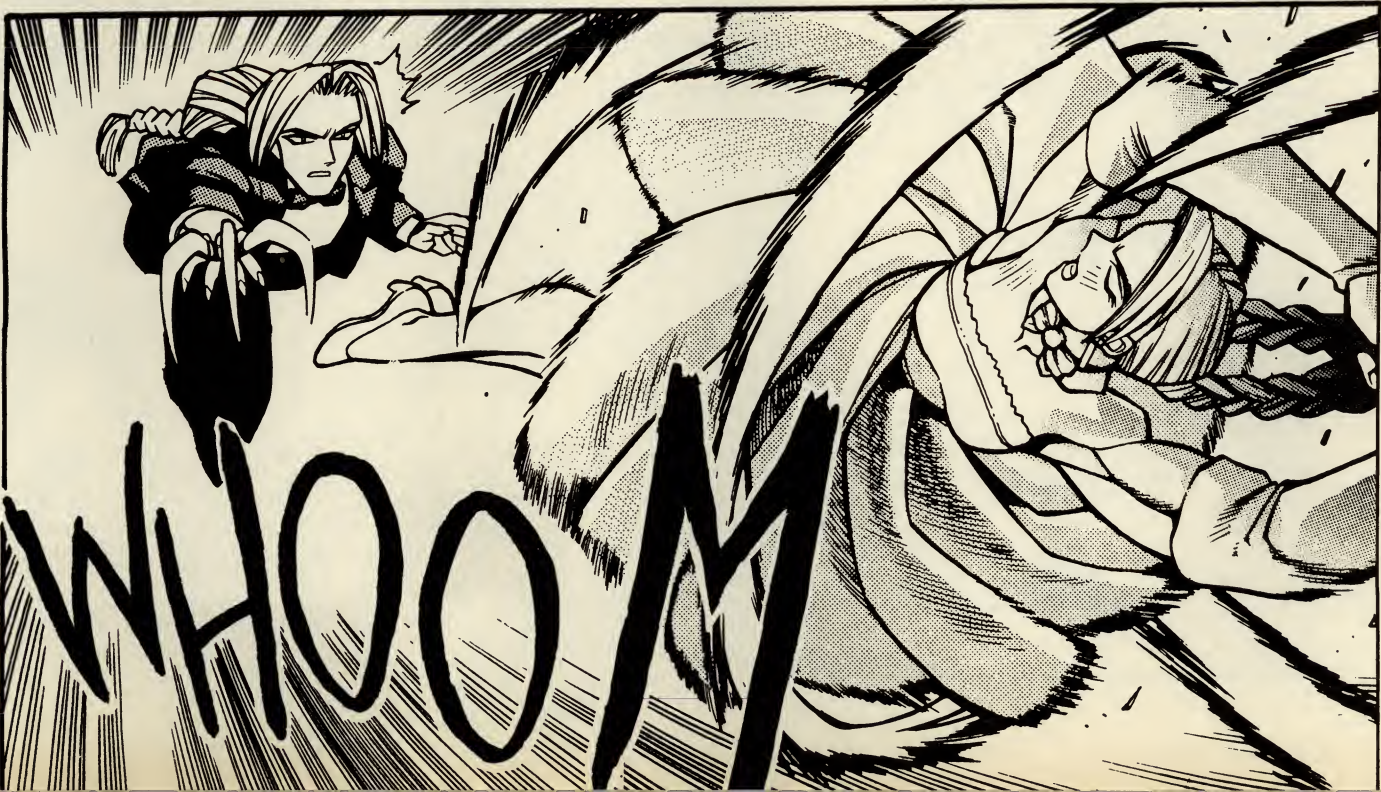
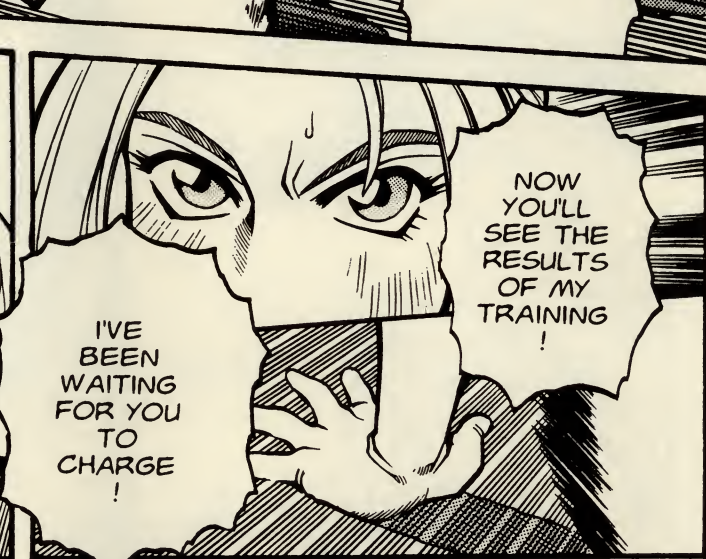
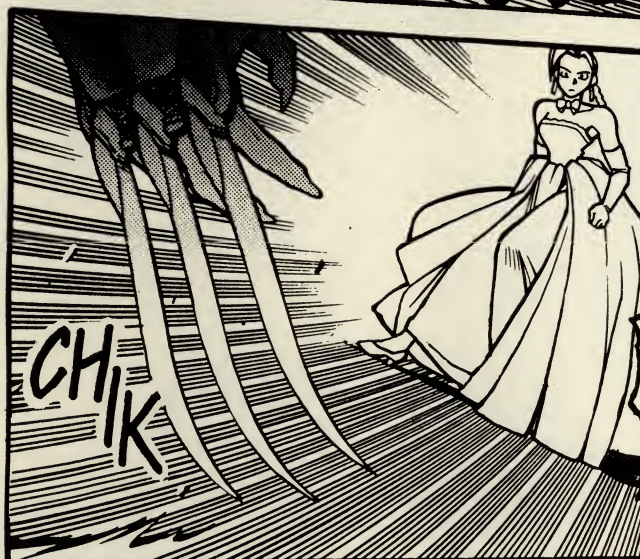
BUT
HAVING
HER AS AN
ENEMY IS
WORSE!

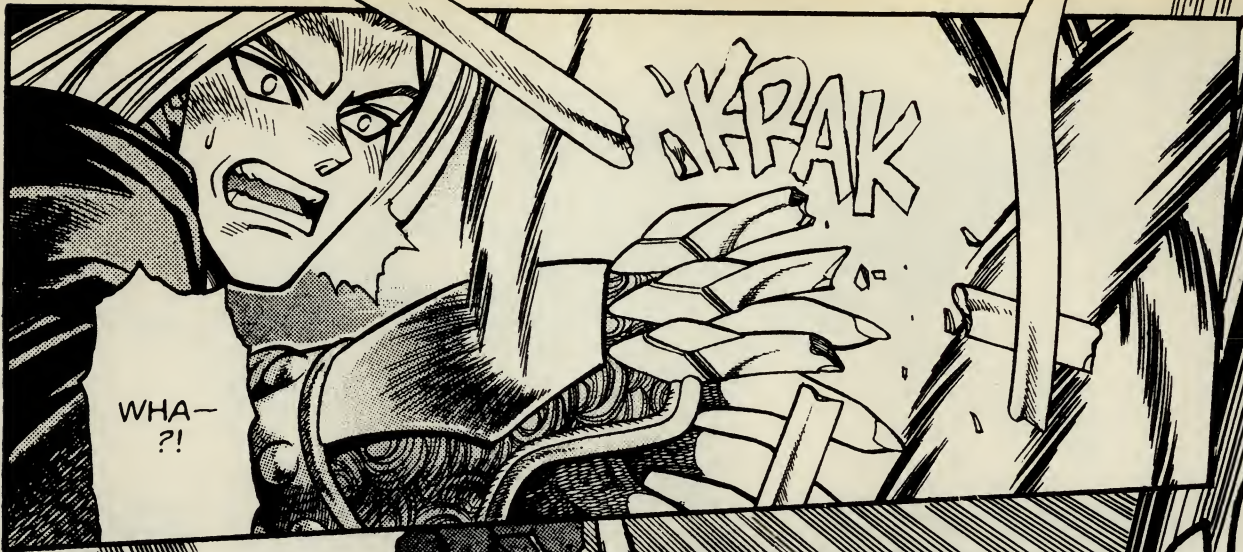


IN
THAT
CASE
...!



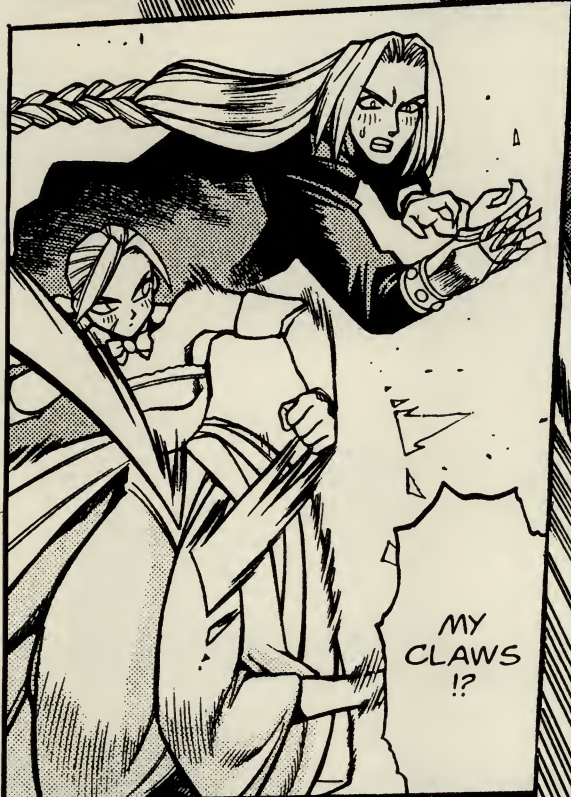
I'LL
KILL YOU
HERE
AND
NOW!



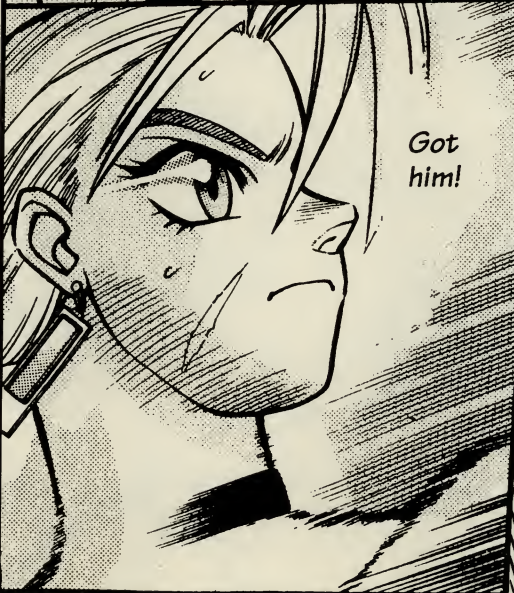


WHA-
?!

KRAK



MY
CLAWS
!?

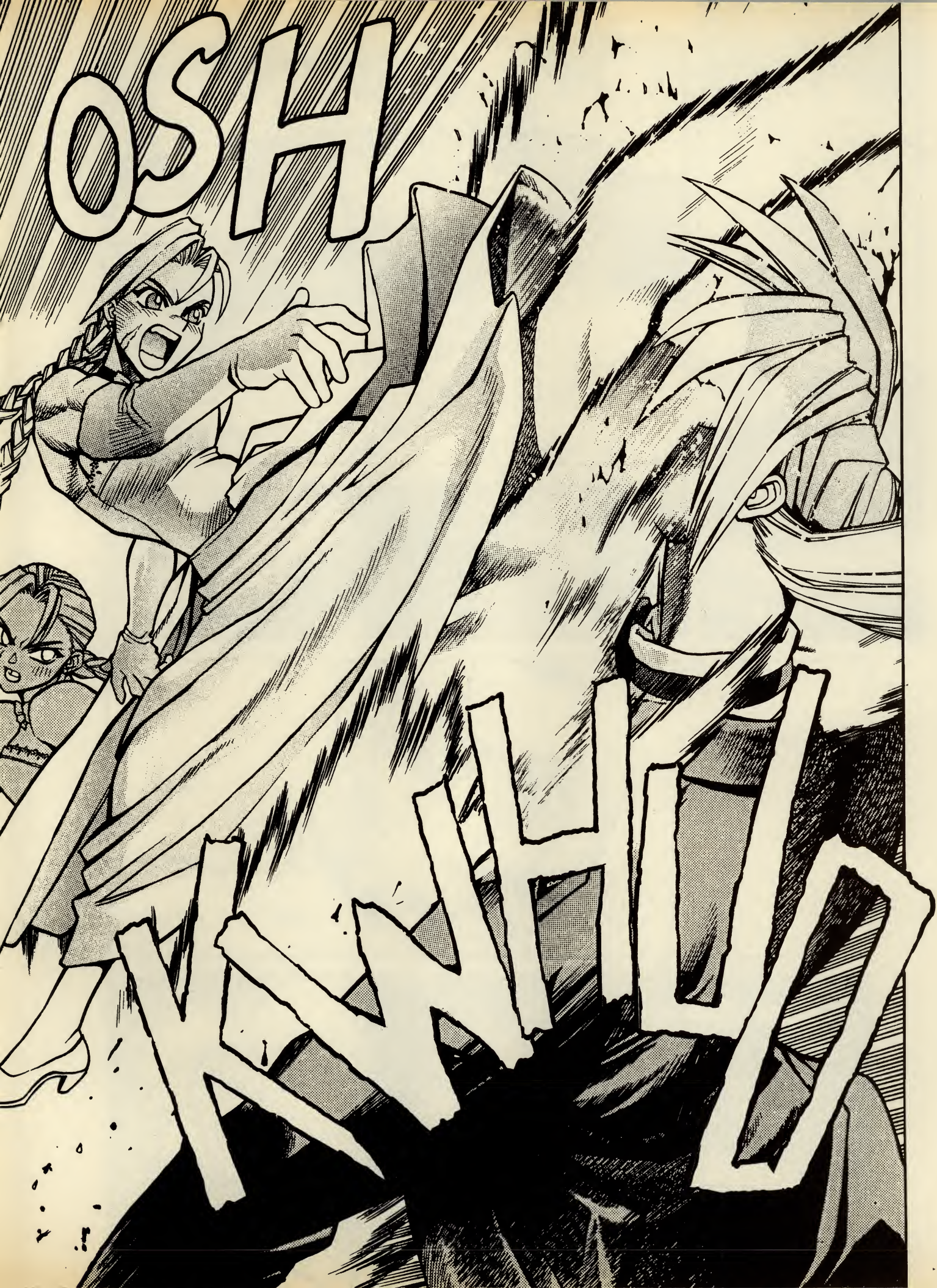


Got
him!

Spin Dive
Smasher!

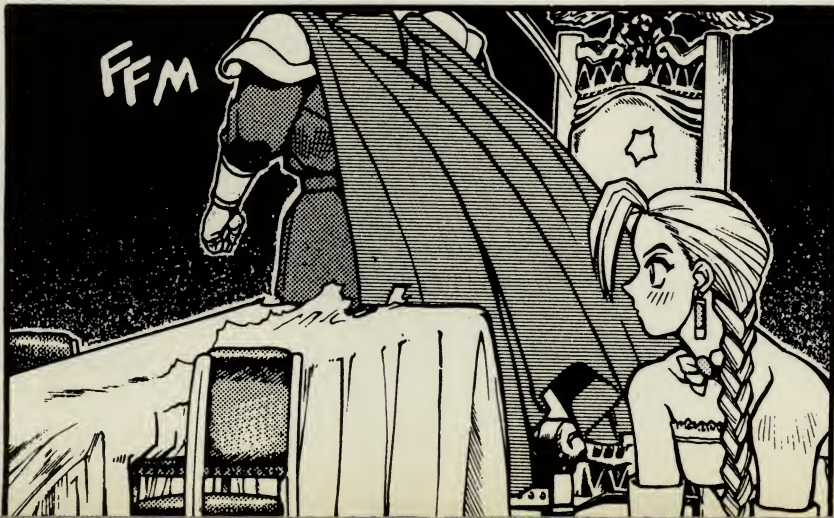
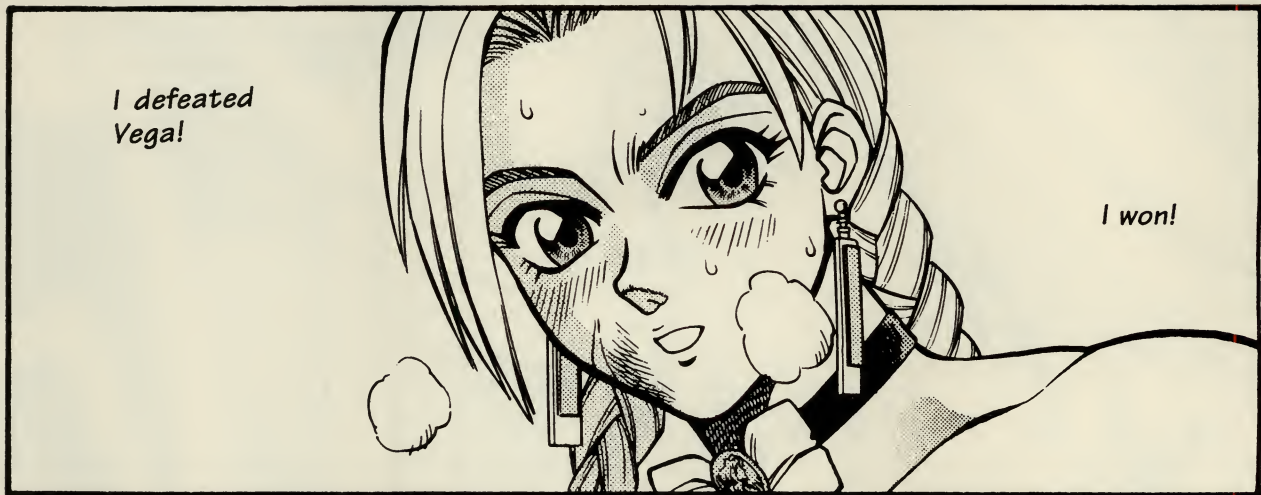
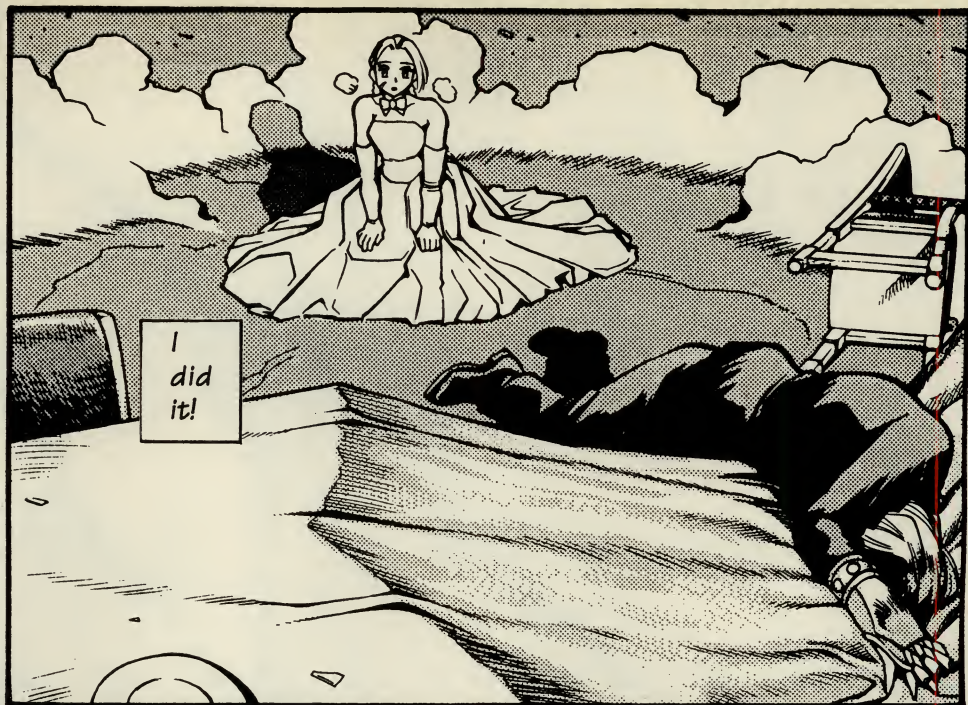


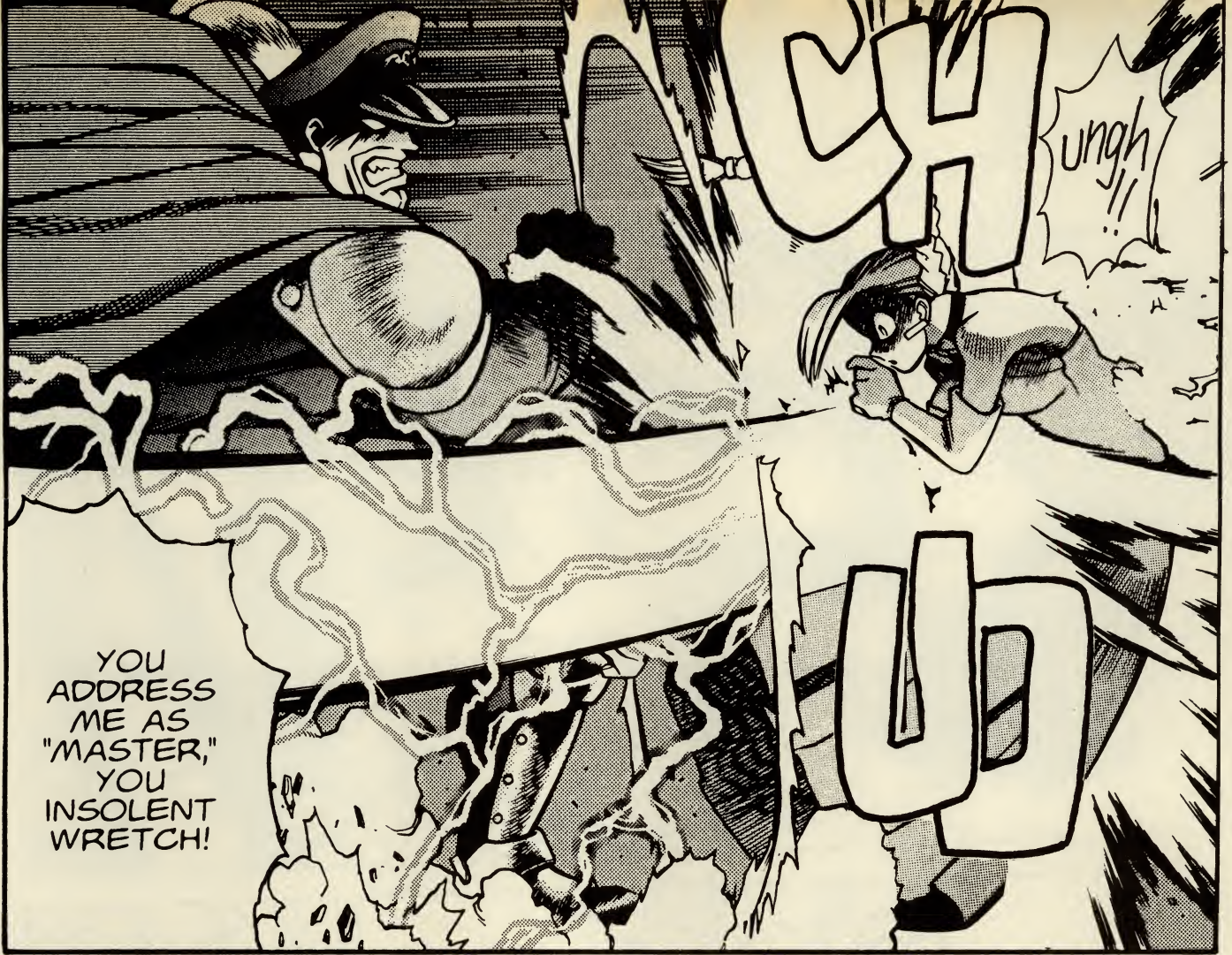
WYHO



OSH

KH





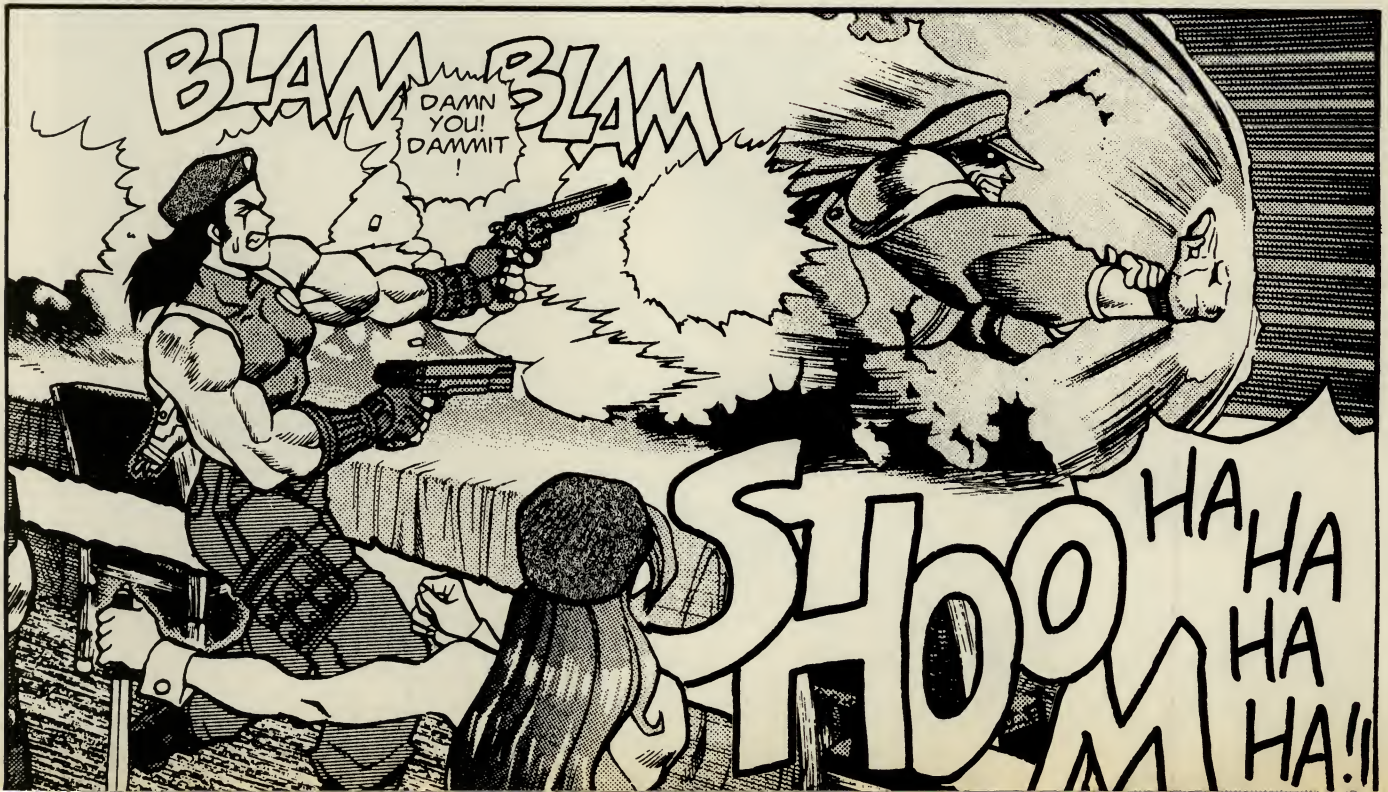
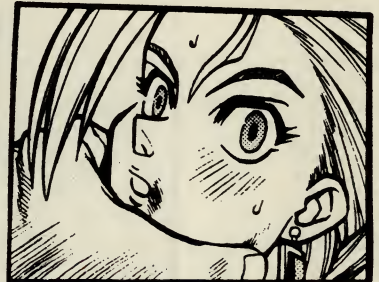
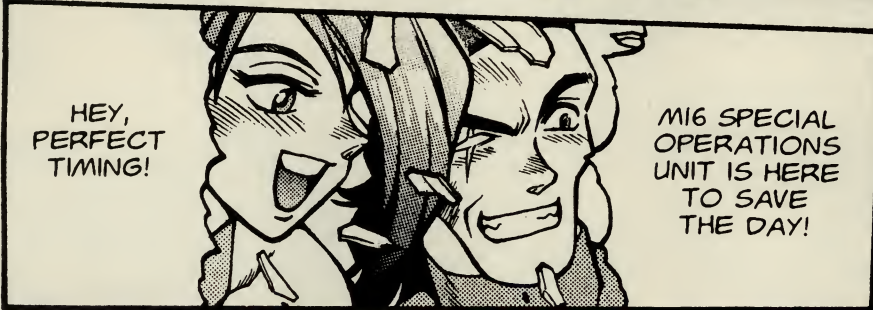
YOU
ADDRESS
ME AS
"MASTER,"
YOU
INSOLENT
WRETCH!



THOSE
EYES!

THOSE
REBELLIOUS
EYES, FEIGNING
RIGHTeousNESS
TO DEFEAT
ME! I DO NOT
LIKE THEM!

I'M GOING
TO PUNISH
YOU SO
THAT YOU'LL
NEVER
DEFY ME
AGAIN!





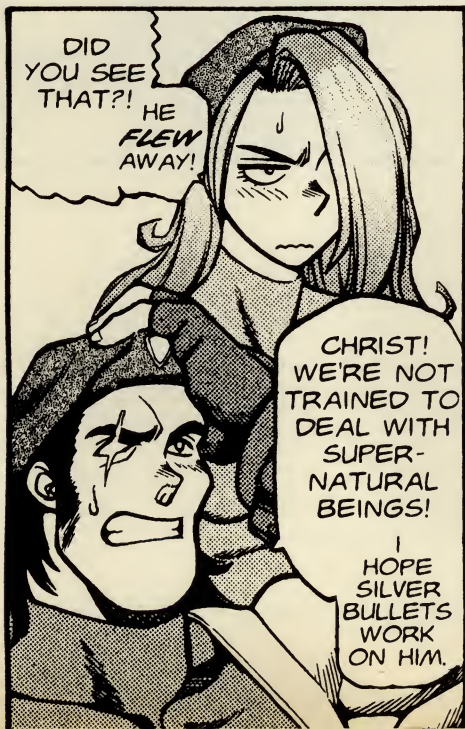
I
THOUGHT
I BOUGHT
OUT M16...
BUT, NO
MATTER!

SPAK
SPAK



WE
SHALL
MEET
AGAIN!

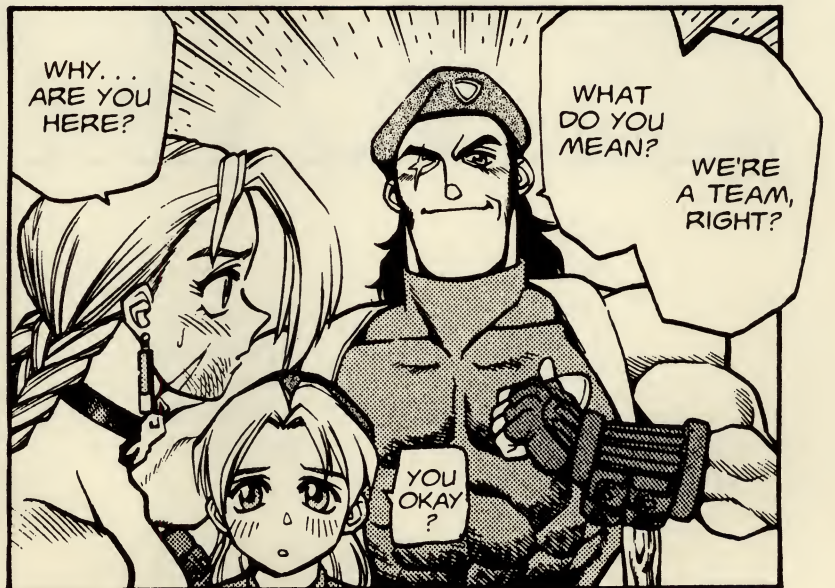
KA DOOM



DID
YOU SEE
THAT?! HE
FLEW
AWAY!

CHRIST!
WE'RE NOT
TRAINED TO
DEAL WITH
SUPER-
NATURAL
BEINGS!

I
HOPE
SILVER
BULLETS
WORK
ON HIM.

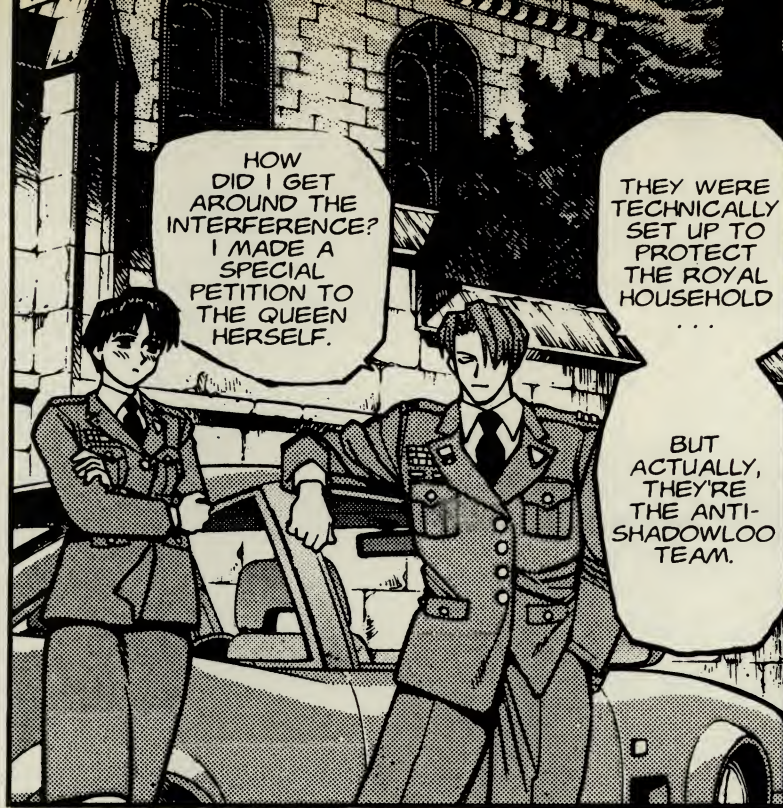


WHY...
ARE YOU
HERE?

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

WE'RE
A TEAM,
RIGHT?

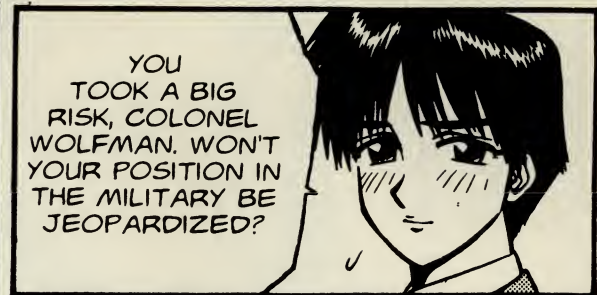
YOU
OKAY
?



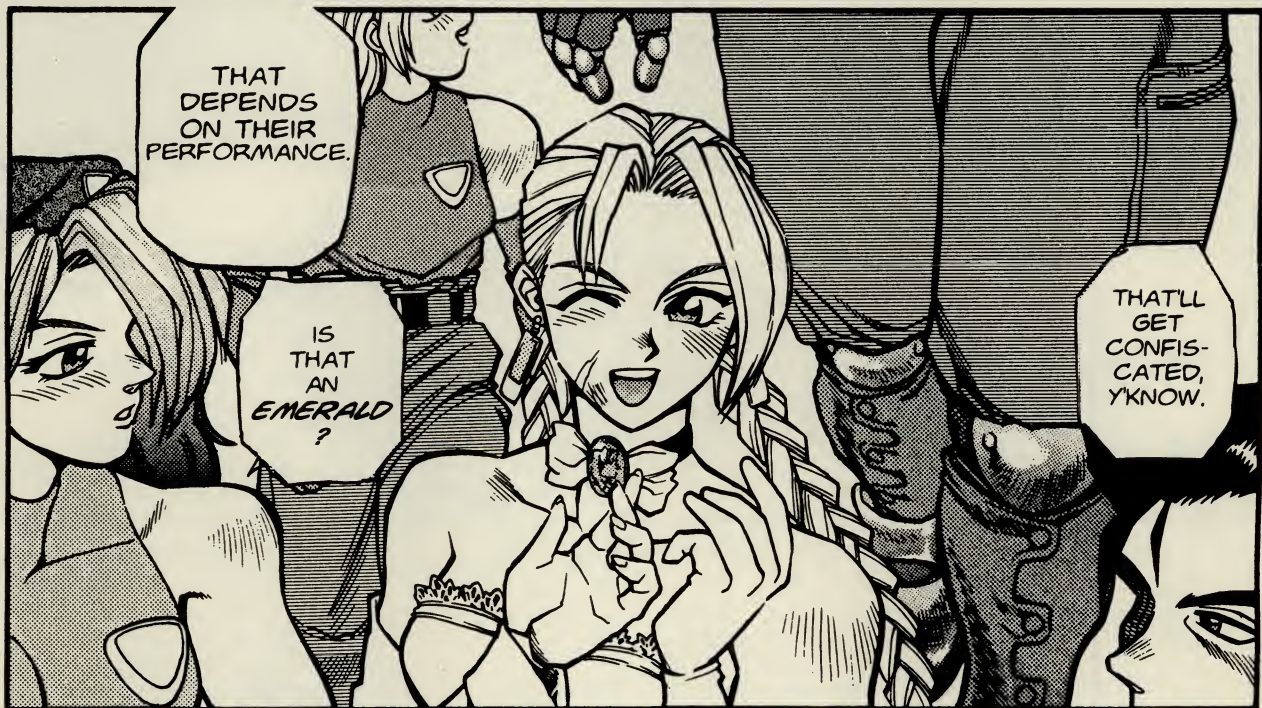
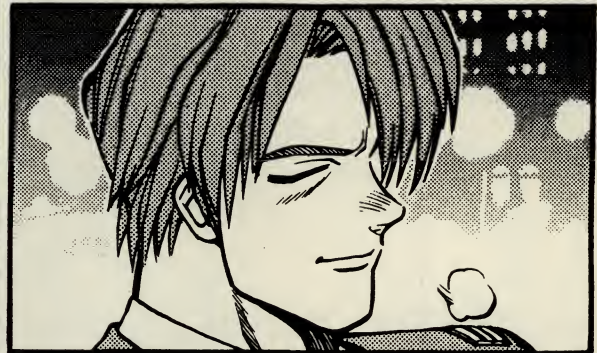
HOW DID I GET AROUND THE INTERFERENCE? I MADE A SPECIAL PETITION TO THE QUEEN HERSELF.

THEY WERE TECHNICALLY SET UP TO PROTECT THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD ...

BUT ACTUALLY, THEY'RE THE ANTI-SHADOWLOO TEAM.



YOU TOOK A BIG RISK, COLONEL WOLFMAN. WON'T YOUR POSITION IN THE MILITARY BE JEOPARDIZED?



THAT DEPENDS ON THEIR PERFORMANCE.

IS THAT AN EMERALD?

THAT'LL GET CONFISCATED, Y'KNOW.

*I have friends.
I have a place to come home to.*

So I can defeat any enemy, no matter how strong!

With *Tobal No. 1*, *Street Fighter Alpha 2*, and *Virtua Fighter 3* all out now, it's hard to get Your Editors to stop playing long enough to answer mail...

DOUBLE STANDARD!

Dear Game On!

Some thoughts about the 'From the Editor' in Issue 3. *Game On!*'s compliance with American publishing guidelines is certainly understandable, however the assurance given by Mr. Thompson: 'We certainly don't censor violence, blood, etc.,' comes off sounding a little odd. Isn't Samurai Showdown violent enough for the guidelines? Surely, the knife-in-the-head panel (issue 1, page 70) would warrant more attention from nosy censors than Nagiri's nudity? Is it just me or does this system of censorship makes little sense? In *Animerica* there are the occasional nude (or at least topless) shots of drawn characters, does it have to be in the 18-and-older section? In this regard, is there a difference between the two magazines?

In the future, when you publish manga that has been censored, you could give a warning to readers. Similar to the little note about the reverse artwork. The above tirade is as much a suggestion for improvement as it is criticism. Furthermore Viz is certainly not the only company in the industry to whom it applies.

Sincerely,
Marek Mohila

Does it make sense? Sense and censorship have little contact. American publishing guidelines allow as many knives in the head as you want (well, maybe not in THE FAMILY CIRCUS), but no sex or nudity.

More than comparing GAME ON! USA to ANIMERICA as far as sex and violence, it's better to compare it to other newsstand video game magazines, which have the same restrictions. It's a matter of distributors being more restrictive of content, not Your Editors. Writing the Editorial for #4, I had already decided to mention the censorship before the issue in question went out; it's always best to be up front about this (and yes, one panel in Issue #4 was also slightly retouched). The 'warning' is a good idea; hopefully SAMURAI SHODOWN will return to its original form in the graphic novel, which will also conclude the series beyond what's printed in this issue. (Sorry about that cliffhanger...)

THE SOUND OF GAMING

Dear Game On! USA,

Thank you! Finally, a gaming magazine written for the cross-medium gaming/anime/manga fan! I just love the amount of attention given to the Japanese-originating games, not just because they're the best games made in the world, but also because of all the culture they culminate as well as represent.

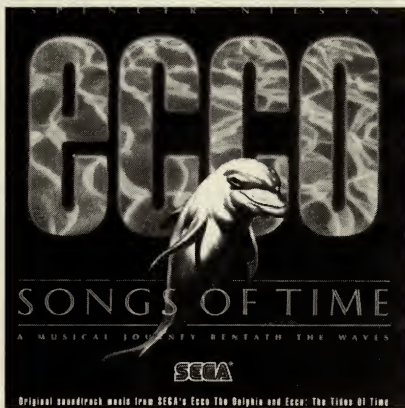
Now that I've swelled your collective heads, let me initiate a slight reality check. While the "Play Test" section is good, I think it could be made better with some sort of quality rating system. My last complaint, of course, is that the magazine is too short. I mean, eighty pages is decent, but adding stuff like a three page letters section and a two page art section would make the mag a better deal.

Now that I've said that, let me suggest a one-page column you could add. Taking a cue from your American sister magazine, *Animerica*, you could set up a "Compact View" type of column, reviewing both old and new video game soundtracks. That would satisfy me greatly—because for years (ever since 1989, I think) I have been a diehard fan of video game music, but I stood alone in this world. Hopefully, you'll be able to change this so that people won't give me a funny look when I say my favorite music type is video game music.

May your controllers stay in one piece in the face of horrible games,

Daniel "Gamehead" Lopez
Reisterstown, MD

P.S. Did you know that Sega is planning on selling video game soundtracks? As if that wasn't enough, you'll be able to buy them at REGULAR MUSIC STORES! Be still my beating heart...



"Play Tests" on GAME ONLINE! will have numerical ratings, so you know more about the games at a glance. You're not the only one to have suggested this!

If you've listened to the FINAL FANTASY CD soundtracks (and other masterpieces ranging from METROID to STRIDER) it's hard not to love video game music. Sega Music Group has released two CDs; ECCO SONGS OF TIME at the end of August and SEGA POWERCUTS NO.1 in October. POWERCUTS has soundtracks from PANZER DRAGOON and BUG, among others, and looks like the start of a series. (What, no STREETS OF RAGE...?)

GAME OVER!...OR NOT?

Dear Game On! USA,

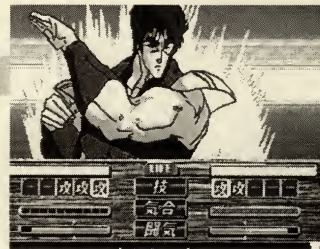
First off I am extremely impressed with *Game On! USA*'s presentation and professionalism. Furthermore, this magazine is for true fanatics who love manga, anime, and video games.

Now I will turn my attention to a number of questions. (1) Do you have any screen shots of *Fist of the North Star*? (2) Any news about *Psychic Force* for the Saturn? Hopefully Taito could use the Model 2 board because of Saturn's limited polygon capability. (3) Any screen shots for *Robotech* Nintendo 64 and if there's a chase view

(behind the plane) because all I've seen is cockpit mode! (4) Screen shots and information on *Virtual On: Cyber Troopers* for Saturn? (5) Development on *Dragon Force* for U.S. release? (6) Info on *Darkstalkers 3*? (7) *Streets of Rage 4* and a game called *Ninja* for the Saturn, by Core?

Last, I personally find the "Game Over!" section the most exciting and innovative. Literally limitless possibilities exist, for example *Sho* (from *Toshinden*) vs. Haohmaru (*Samurai Shodown 2*) in a bitter fight to the end. Keep up the most excellent work!

Your fan,
Todd M. Raymond
Seattle, WA



Here's *Fist* in your eye!

First, your questions. (1) Your FIST is our command. (2) PSYCHIC FORCE is a PlayStation exclusive. As for U.S. release...(whistles innocently). (3) Yes, it's called the "tail gunner" view. Look for ROBOTECH info in this Newsline and in the premiere issue of GAME ONLINE!. (4) Viola! See Newsline. (5) It should be out already; more on GAME ONLINE!. (6) NIGHTWARRIORS 2 is expected in 1996, but is being kept very secret. (7) Core's fighting game NINJA is scheduled for publication by Eidos Interactive, but the release date is still TBA. No news on STREETS OF RAGE 4.

Second, "Game Over!" was a love-it-or-hate-it section. We had some good submissions (yes, that means you, Chris), and some inane ones as well. Fans of "Game Over!" should e-mail us with your proposals.

Fan Art Wanted!

Alas, this isn't a color letters page, but the art of **Jennifer Seng**, **Jeffrey Nevins** and other fan art contributors will be shown on the Web in *Game Online!* Future character designers of the world, feel free to send us more! The only guidelines are as follows: (1) Avoid using pencil or binder paper. (2) **NO LARGER THAN 8 1/2" x 11"**! (3) It doesn't have to be drawn on an envelope. (4) **LABEL** the back of your art with your **NAME, ADDRESS, and AGE**. Thanks for your creativity!

Future mail to **Game On! USA** will be answered at **Game Online!** World Wide Web address <http://www.j-pop.com>. Address correspondence to: **GAME ON! USA-C/O VIZ COMMUNICATIONS-P.O. BOX 77010-SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107**, or via the Internet to game_on@sirius.com. We are unable to answer mailed letters individually. Concise, typed letters have the best chance of being published. We reserve the right to edit for space or clarity.

SAMURAI SHODOWN

BATTLE SEVEN ABSOLUTION

Story by **KYOICHI NANATSUKI**

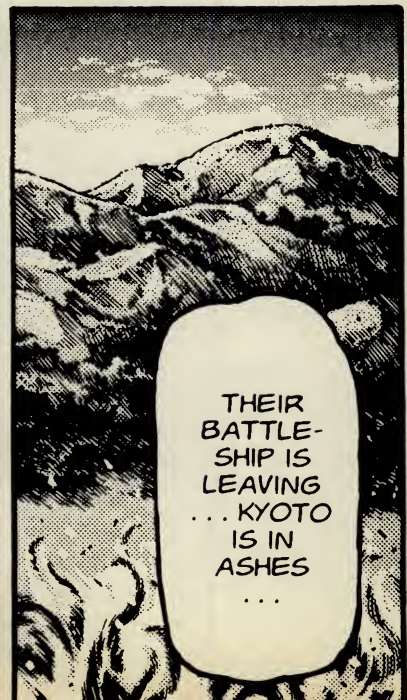
Art by **YUKI MIYOSHI**

English Adaptation by **FRED BURKE & KAORU HOSAKA**

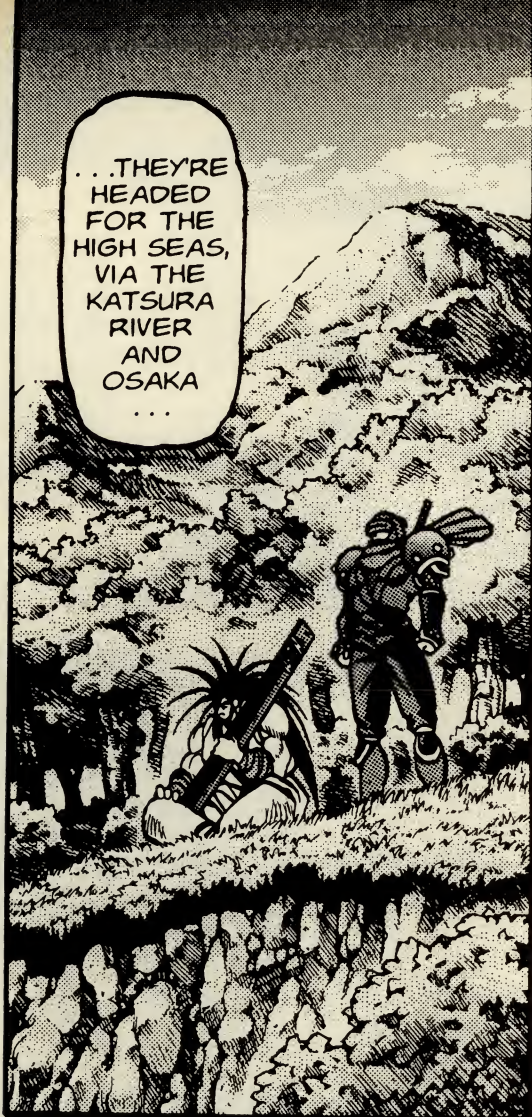
Lettering & Touch-up by **MARY KELLEHER**

© SNK 1993

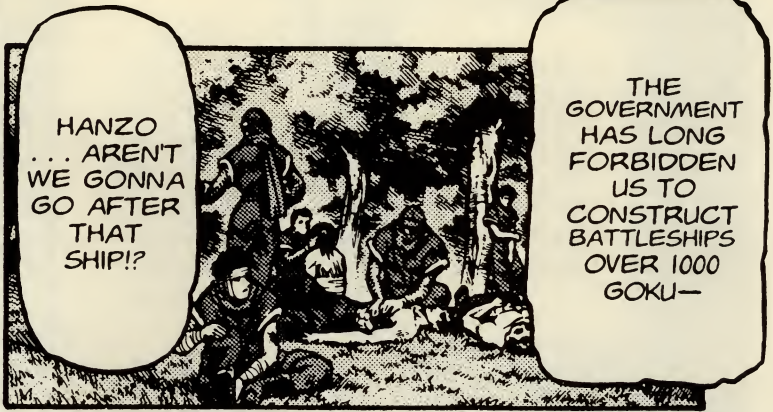
For the purposes of publication in English, the artwork in this comic is in reverse from the original Japanese version.



THEIR
BATTLE-
SHIP IS
LEAVING
... KYOTO
IS IN
ASHES
...



...THEY'RE HEADED FOR THE HIGH SEAS, VIA THE KATSURA RIVER AND OSAKA ...



HANZO ... AREN'T WE GONNA GO AFTER THAT SHIP!?

THE GOVERNMENT HAS LONG FORBIDDEN US TO CONSTRUCT BATTLESHIPS OVER 1000 GOKU-



-THERE'S NOT A SHIP IN THE COUNTRY THAT CAN EQUAL THAT ONE!

GR R



HMM ...



...RIGHT ?



?

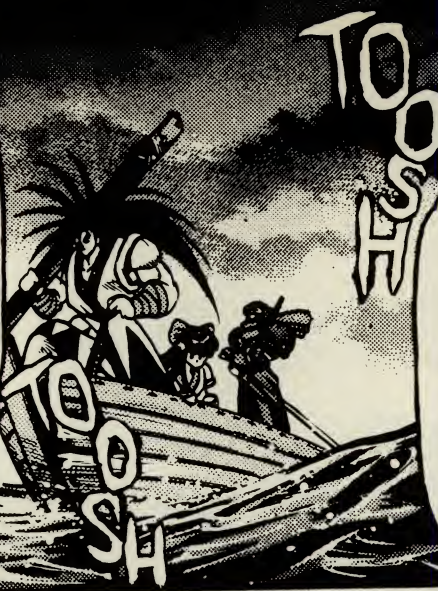


I TAKE IT THAT OTHER COUNTRIES DO HAVE THEM, EVEN THOUGH OURS DOESN'T ...

A few days later, a boat secretly sailed out from Kii Peninsula.

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, FOREIGN SHIPS HAVE FREQUENTLY APPEARED IN THE SEA OF JAPAN.

ALL OF THEM ARE HUMONGOUS SHIPS WITH CANNONS — UNLIKE ANY FOUND IN OUR COUNTRY.

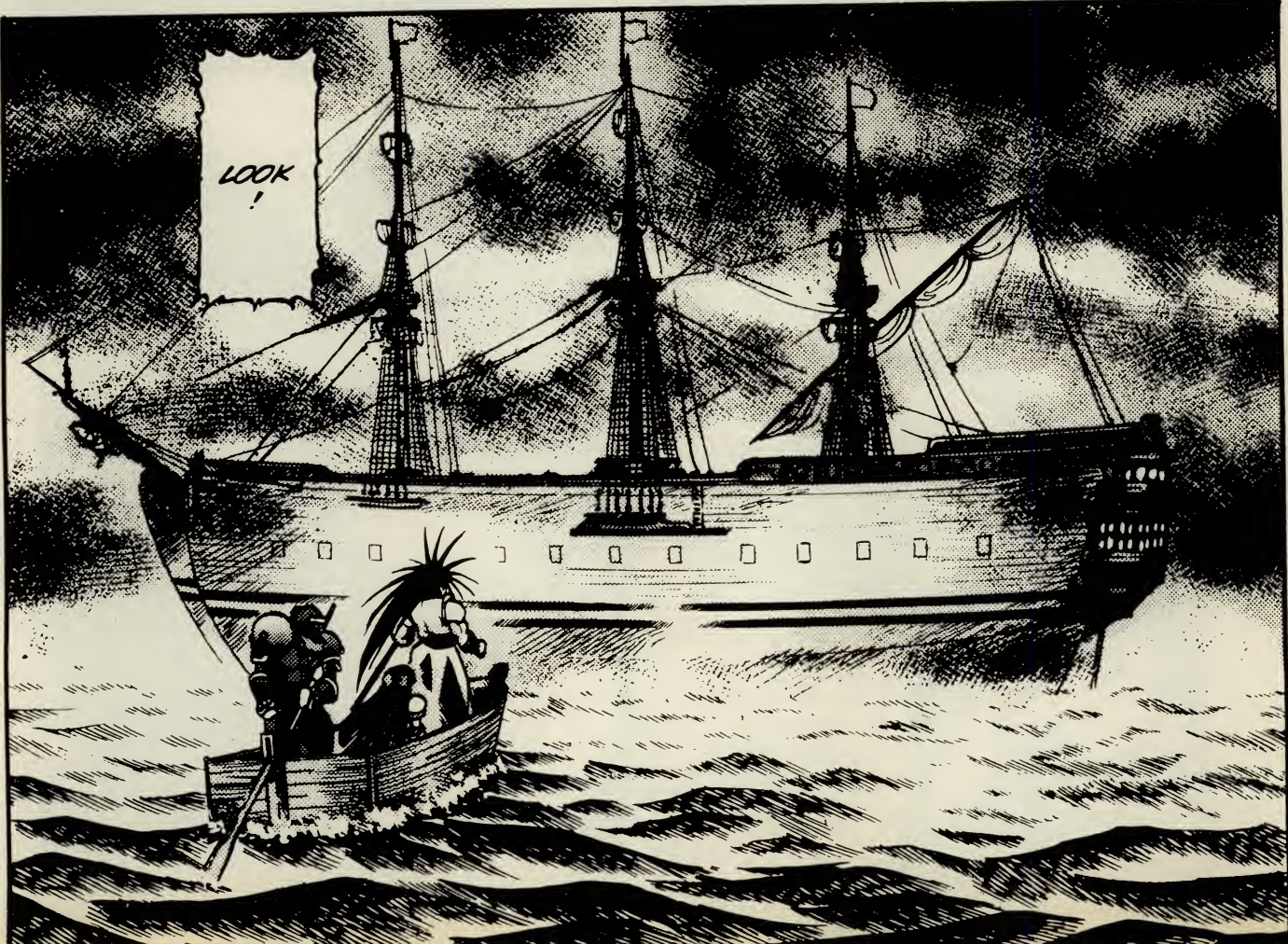


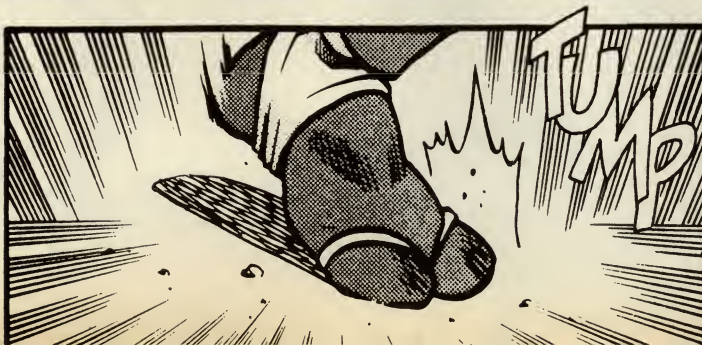
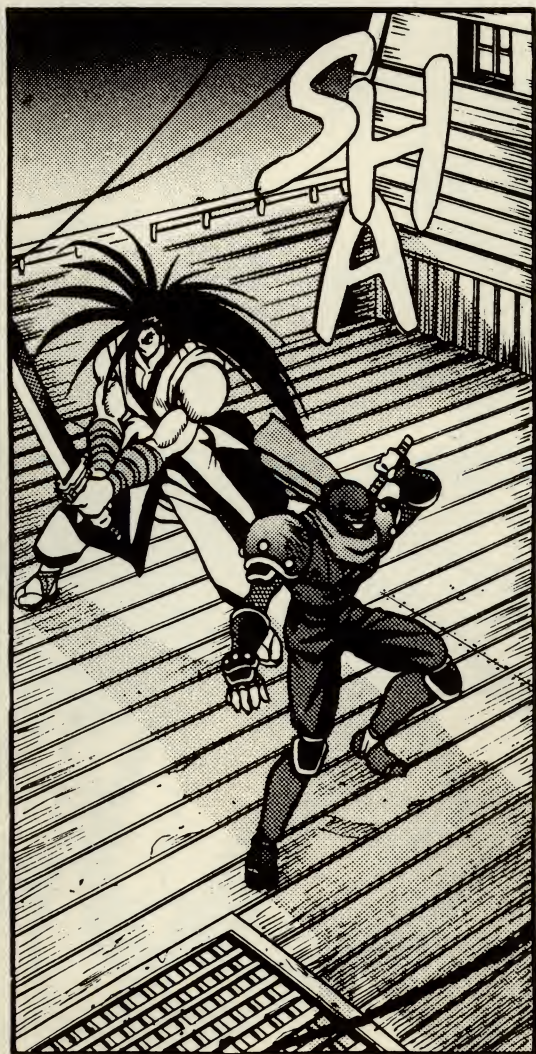
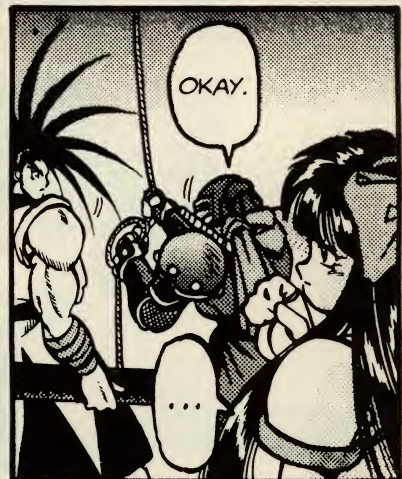
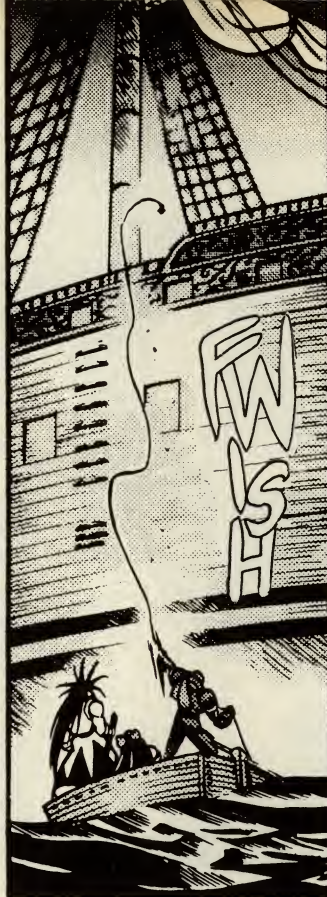
I SEE. SO WE'LL ADD HIJACKING TO OUR REPERTOIRE ...

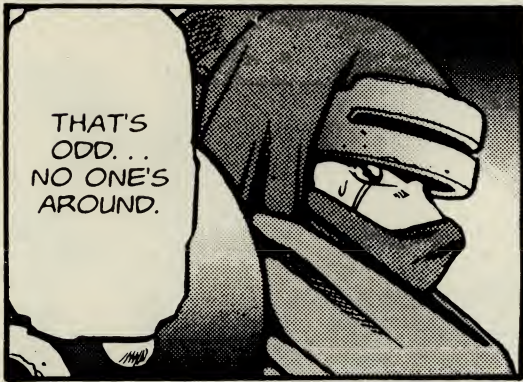
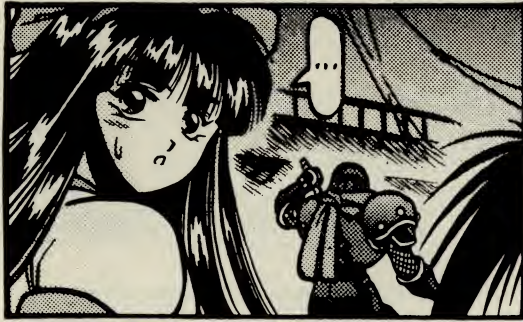
KAWWW!!
FWAP
FWAP



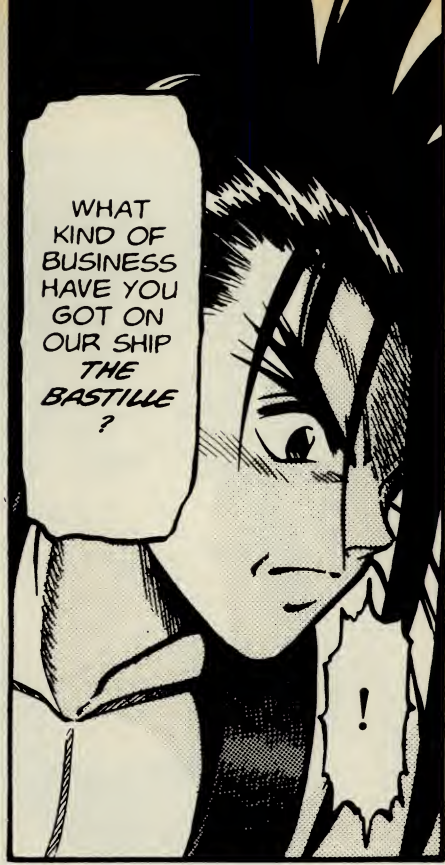
LOOK!



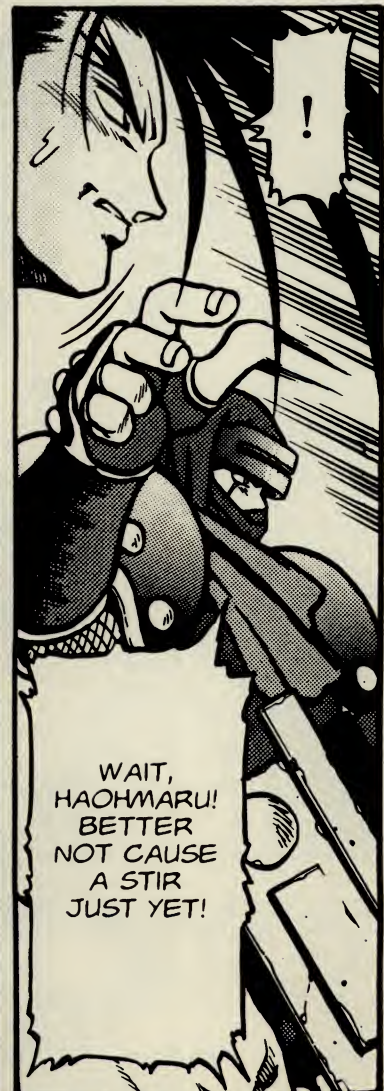
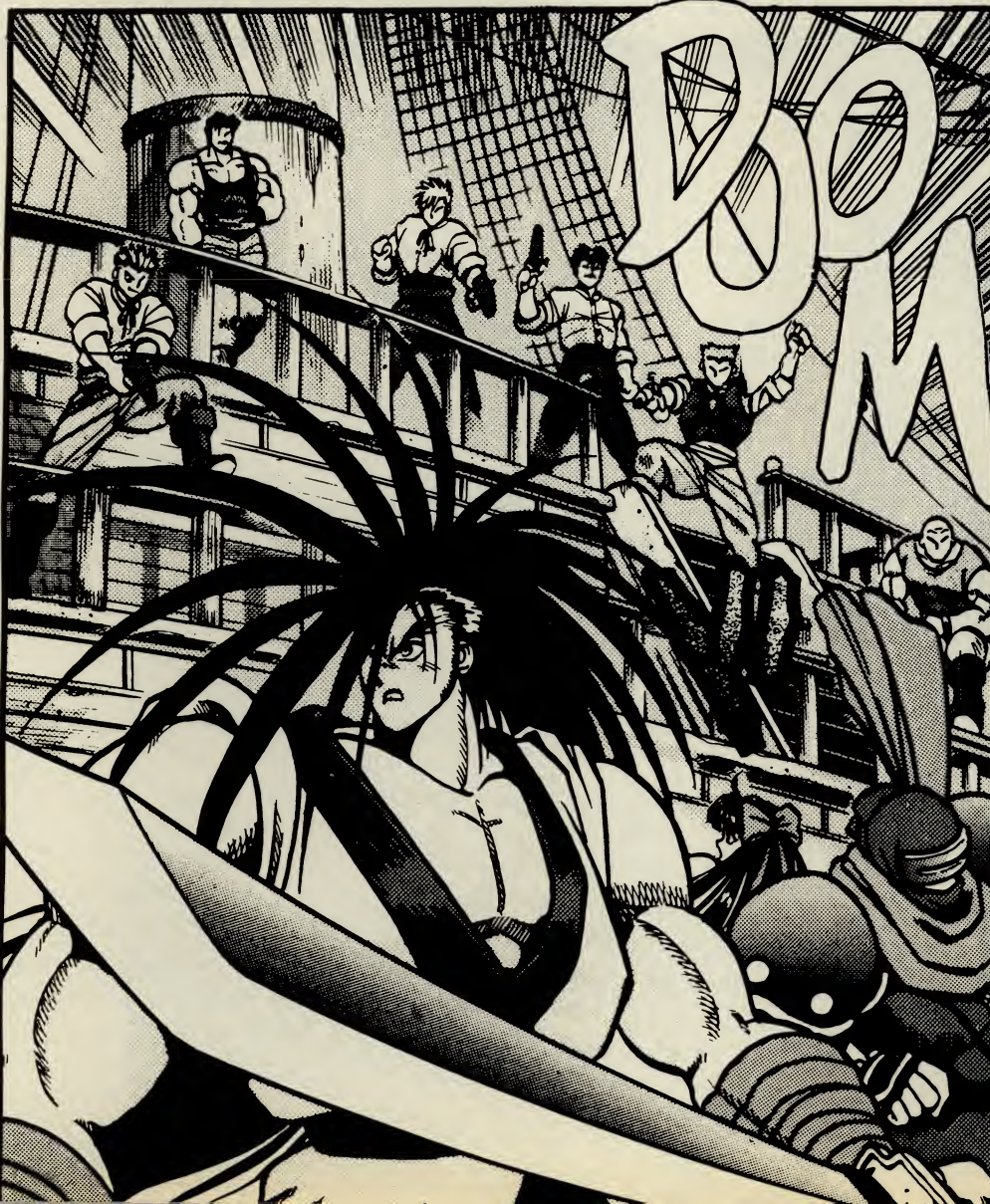




THAT'S
ODD...
NO ONE'S
AROUND.



WHAT
KIND OF
BUSINESS
HAVE YOU
GOT ON
OUR SHIP
THE
BASTILLE
?



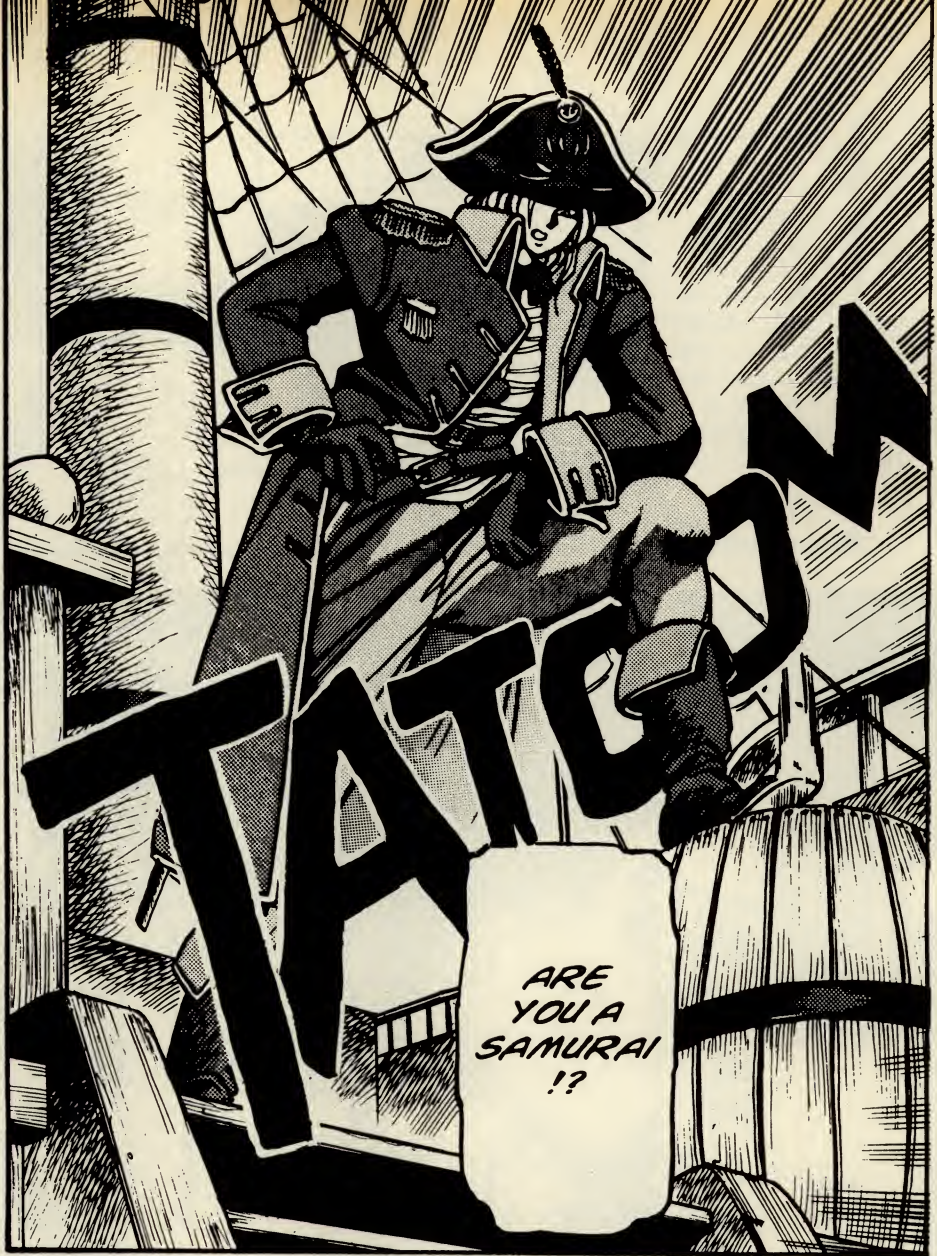
WAIT,
HAOHMARU!
BETTER
NOT CAUSE
A STIR
JUST YET!



I WON'T
ASK WHY
YOU GENTS
VENTURED
ONTO THE
BASTILLE-



-BUT
THERE
IS *ONE*
THING I
DO WANT
TO ASK
YOU...

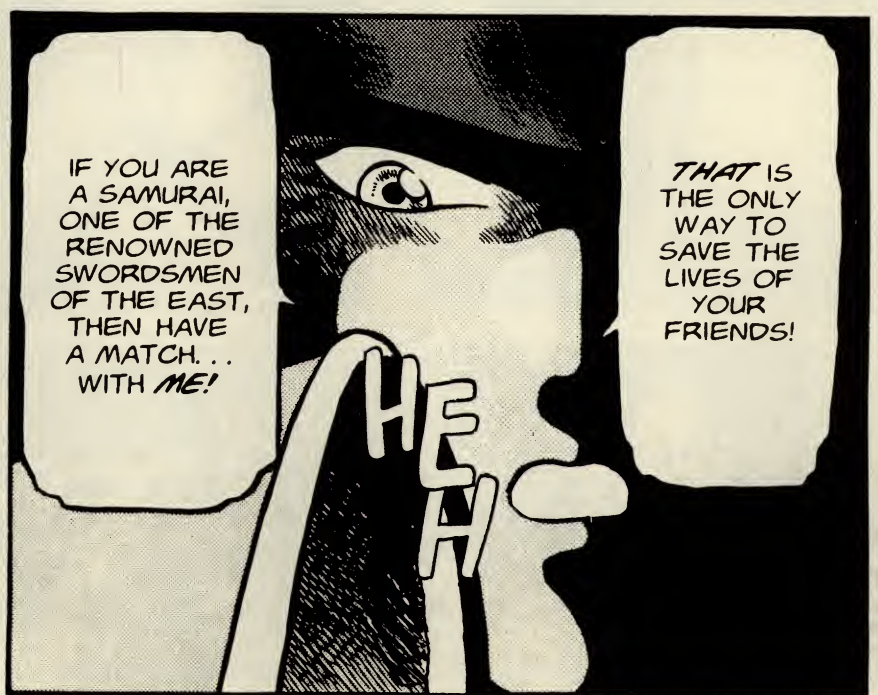


TATTOO

ARE
YOU A
SAMURAI
!?



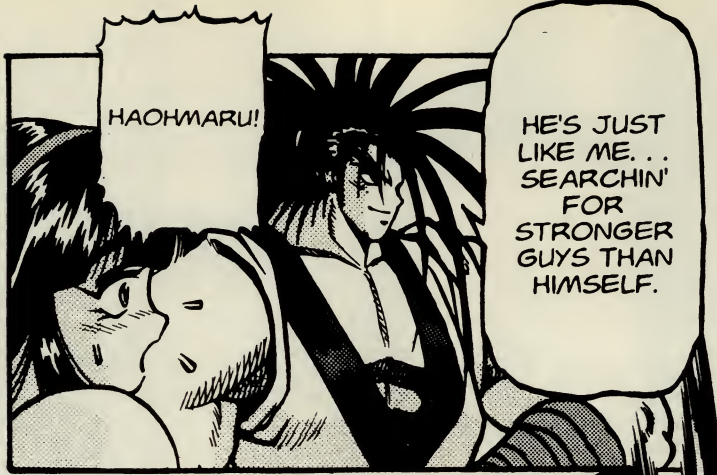
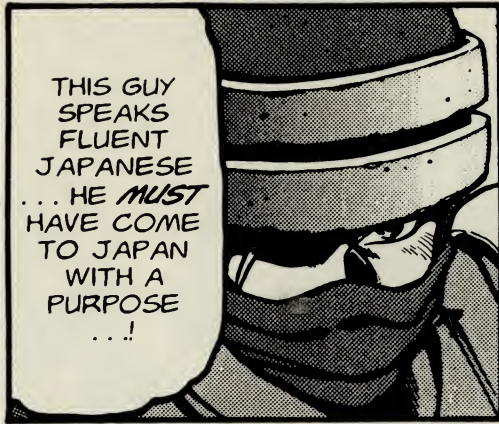
YES
... I
AM A
SAMURAI
!

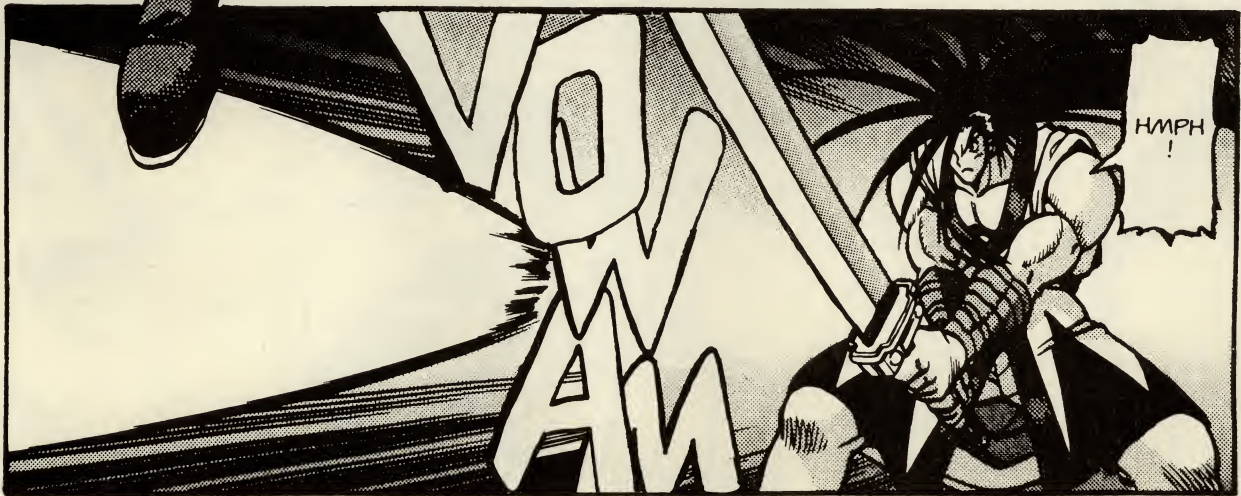
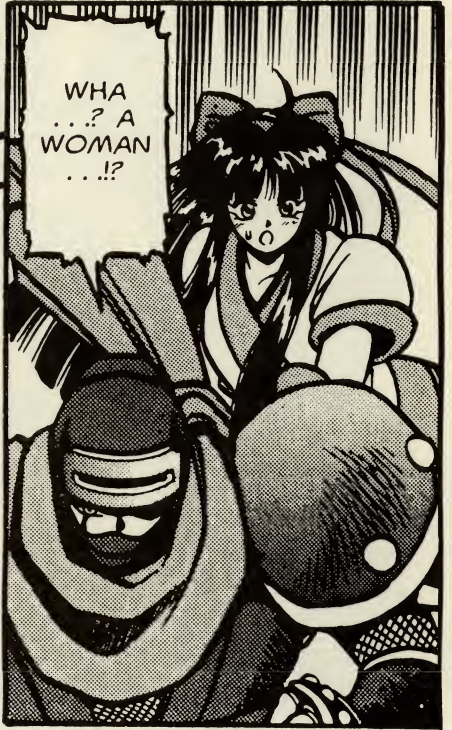
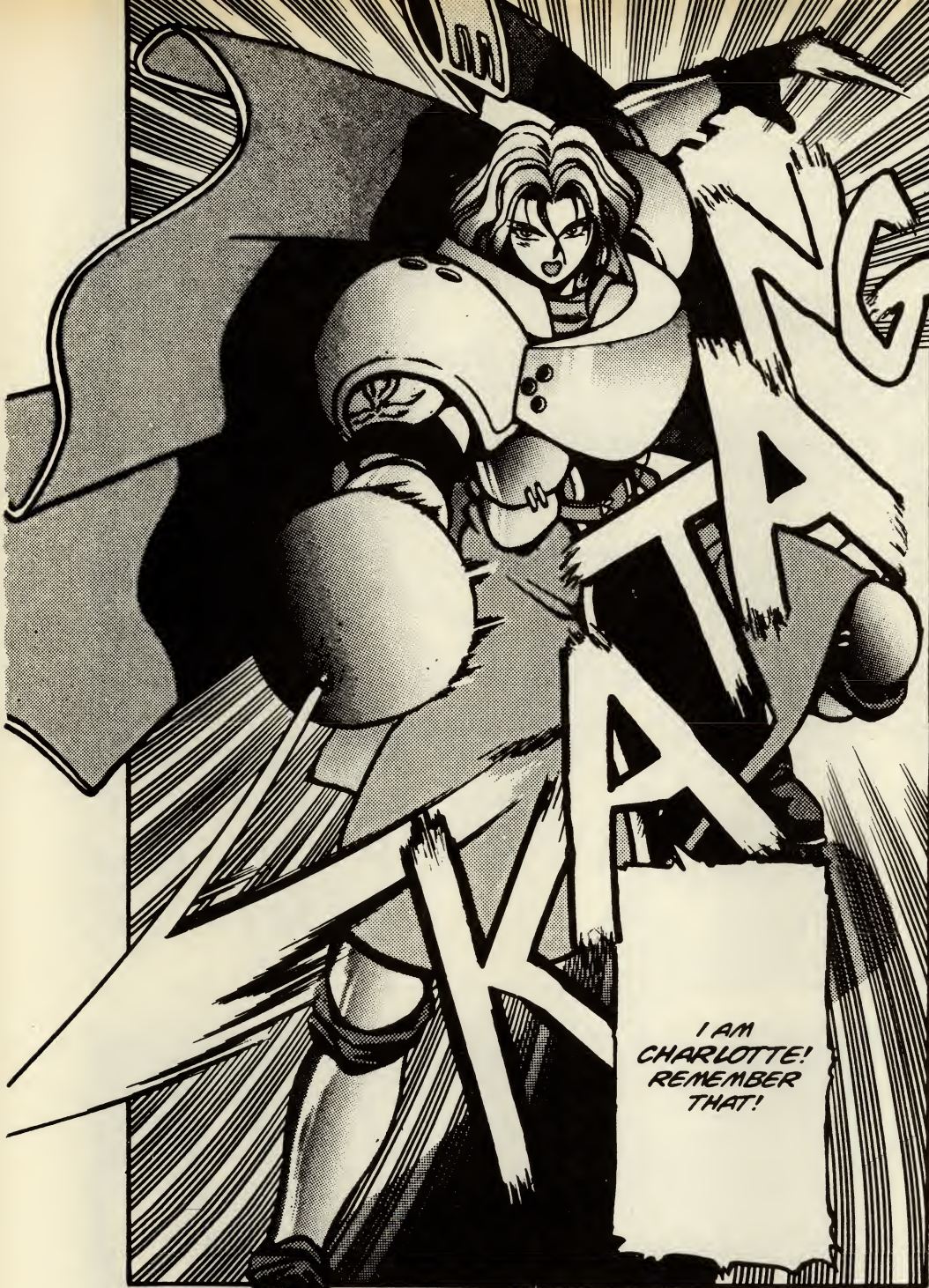


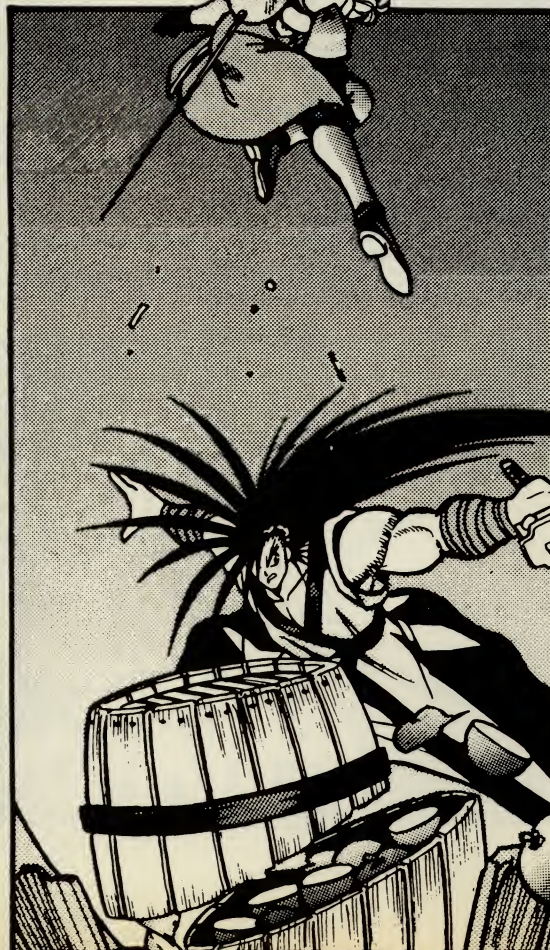
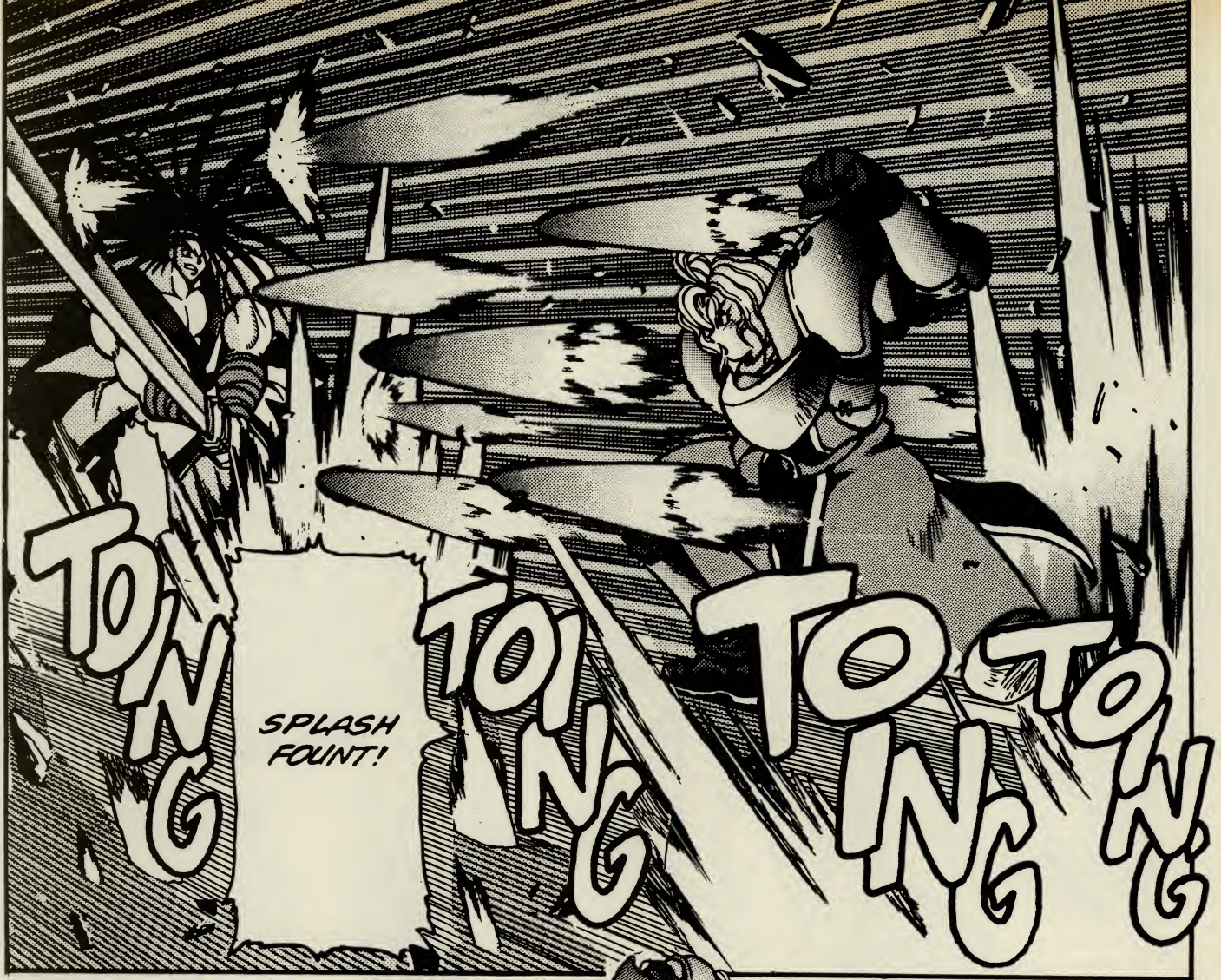
IF YOU ARE
A SAMURAI,
ONE OF THE
RENOWNED
SWORDSMEN
OF THE EAST,
THEN HAVE
A MATCH...
WITH *ME!*

*THAT IS
THE ONLY
WAY TO
SAVE THE
LIVES OF
YOUR
FRIENDS!*

**HE
H**







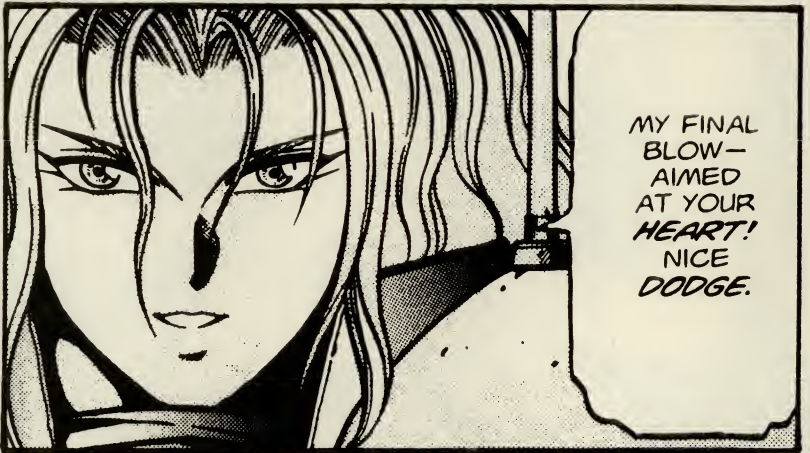
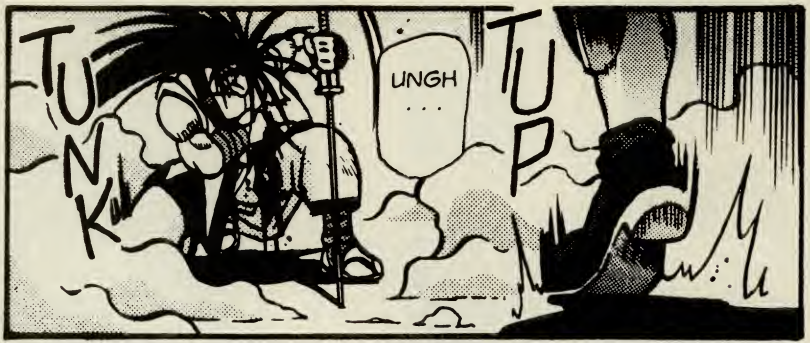


SLASH

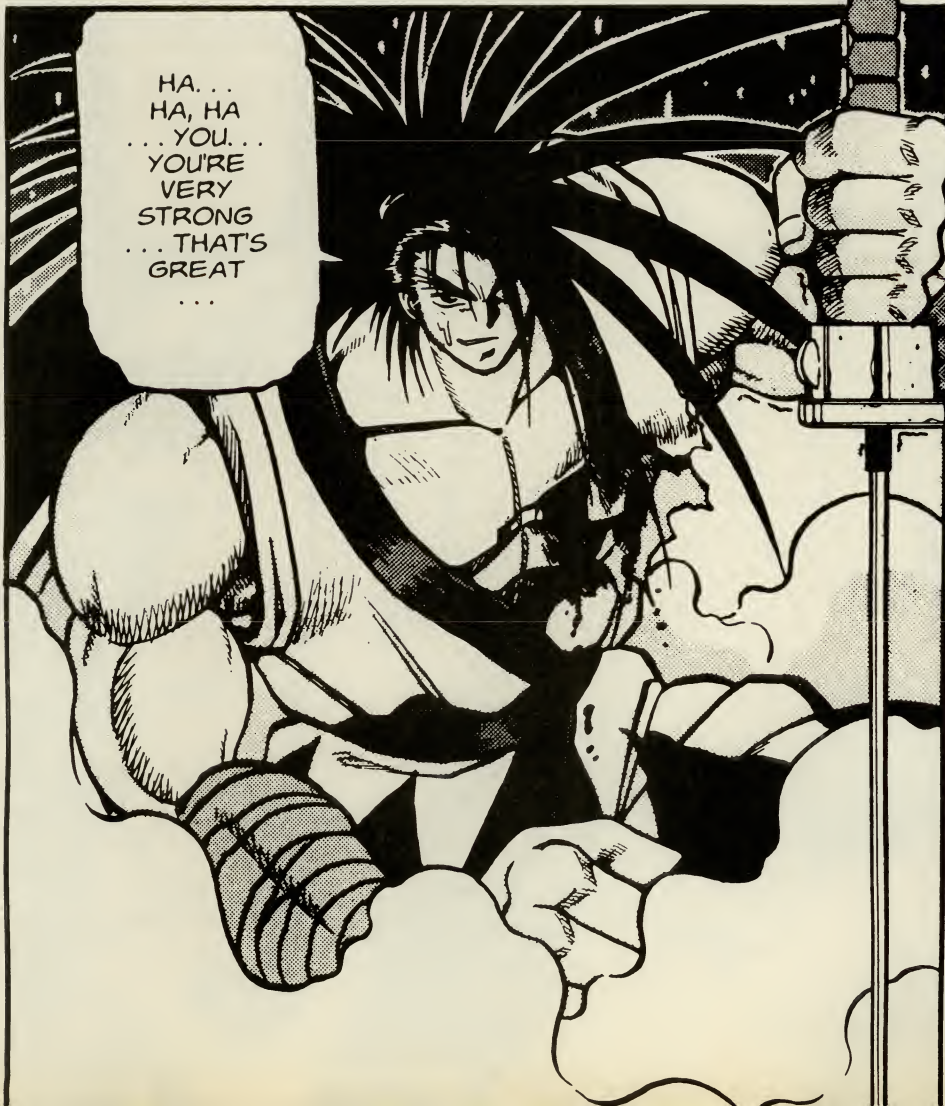
TR. SLASH!!



GWAH!



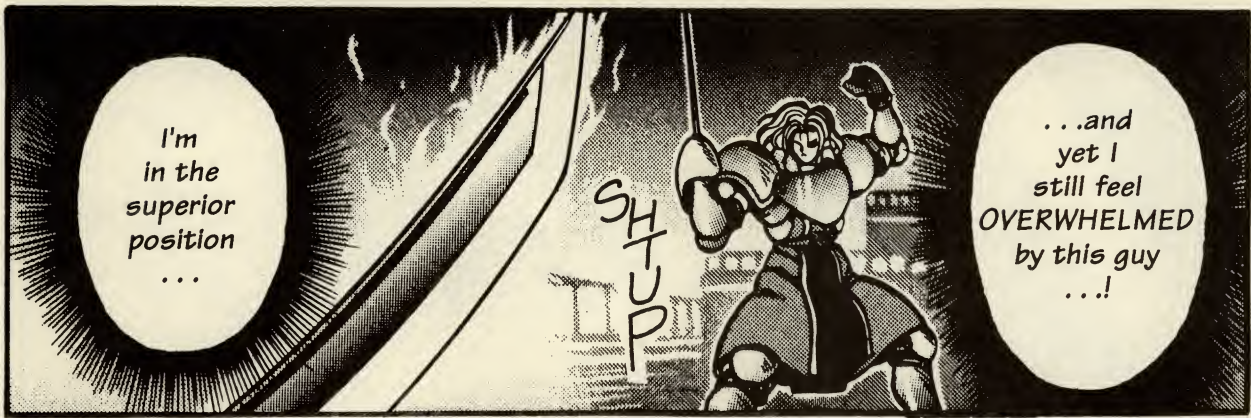
MY FINAL BLOW—
AIMED
AT YOUR
HEART!
NICE
DODGE.



HA...
HA, HA
... YOU...
YOU'RE
VERY
STRONG
... THAT'S
GREAT
...



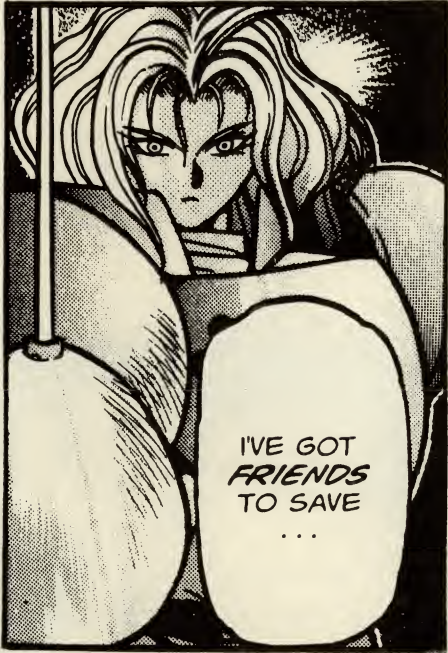
He's
powerful
... Is he
merely
humoring
me?



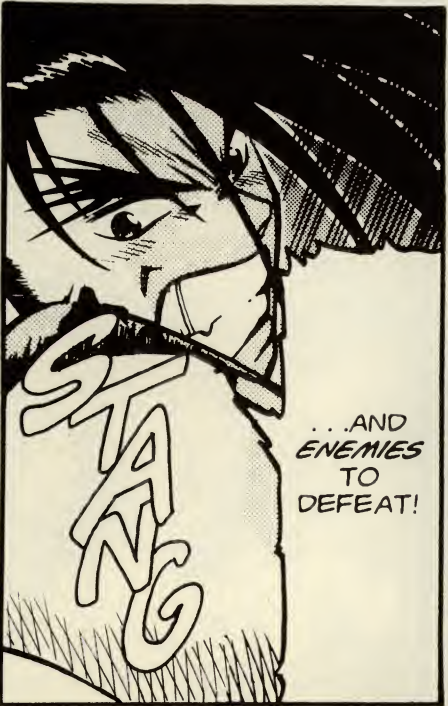
I'm
in the
superior
position
...

SHUP

...and
yet I
still feel
OVERWHELMED
by this guy
...!



I'VE GOT
FRIENDS
TO SAVE
...

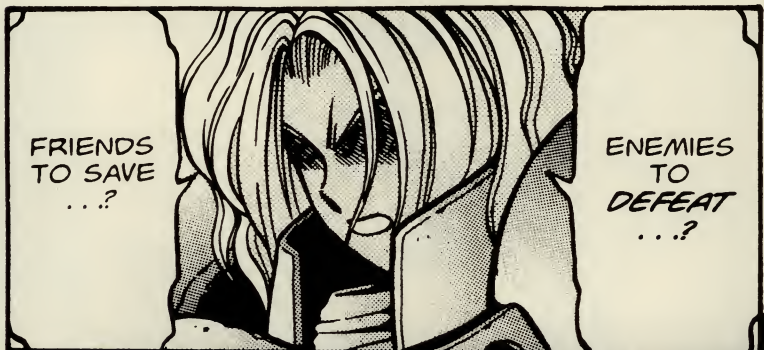
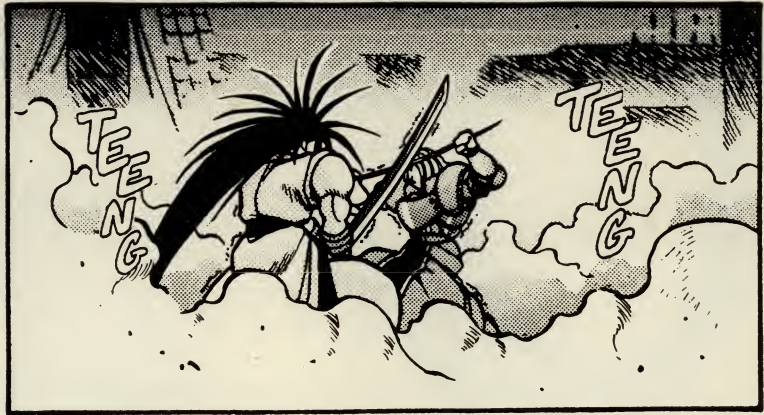
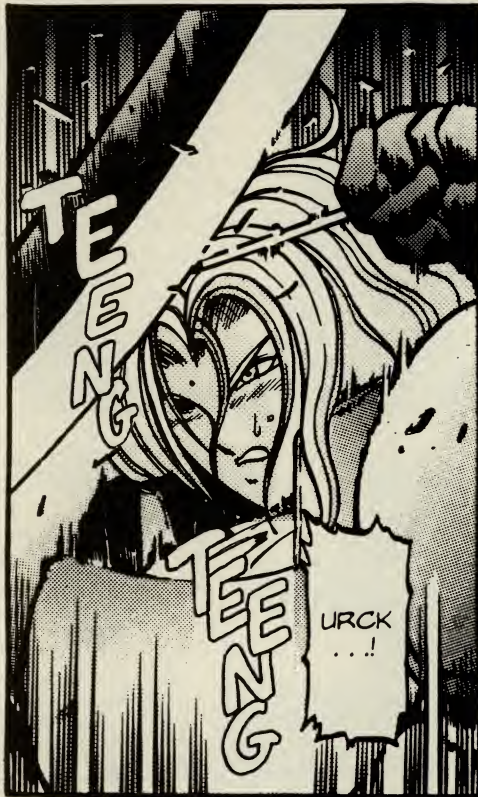


... AND
ENEMIES
TO DEFEAT!



I CAN'T
BE
BEATEN
BY
SOMEONE
WITHOUT
A CARE
IN THE
WORLD!

SKAK
SKAK
STANG
STANG




KRANG






As the battle between citizens seeking liberty and the oppressive French parliament reached an appalling level...

...Marie Antoinette wished DEATH on the rebels, as if she was led by the DEVIL.



FRIENDS...
I EMBARK
ON A
JOURNEY
TO OBTAIN
THE POWER
TO CRUSH
THE DEVIL!

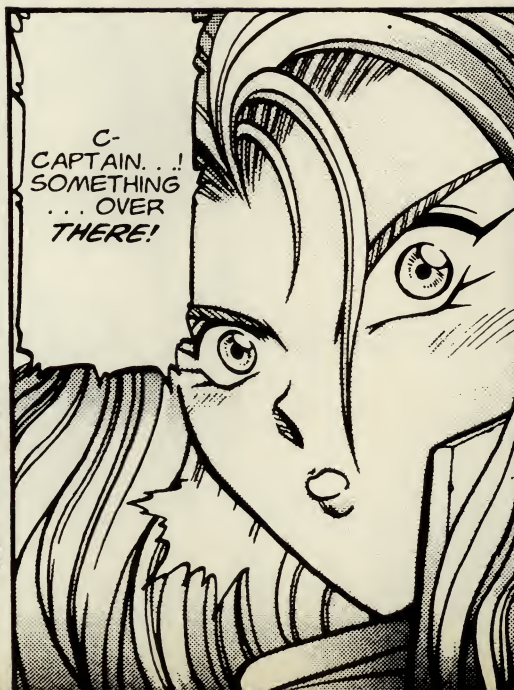
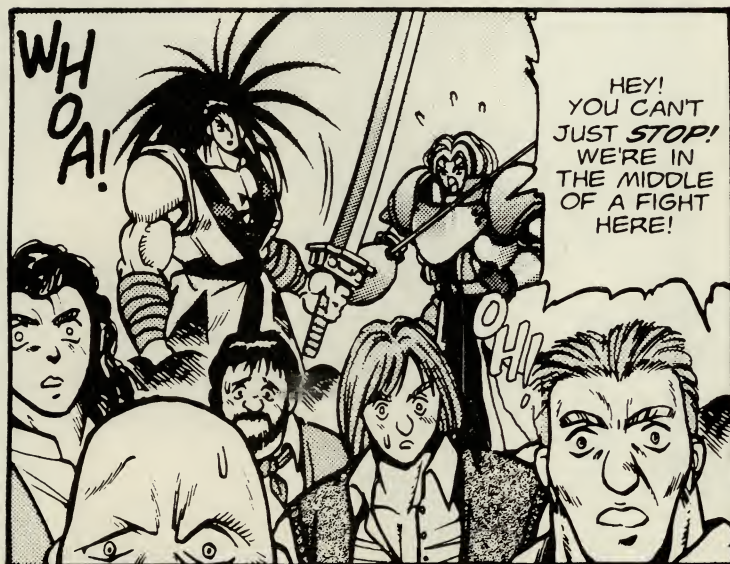
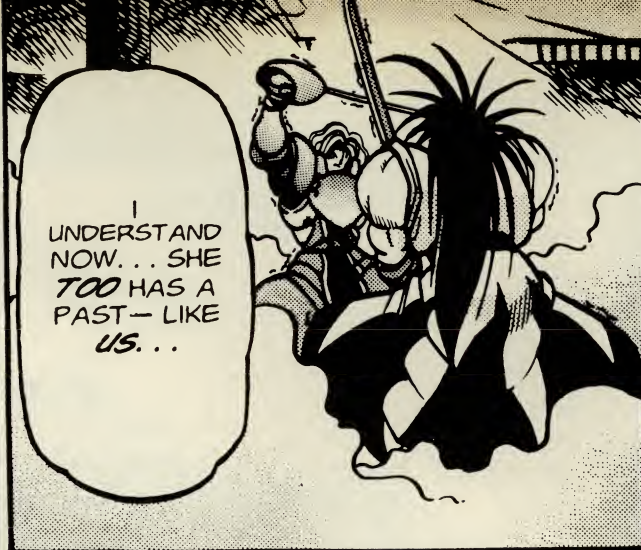
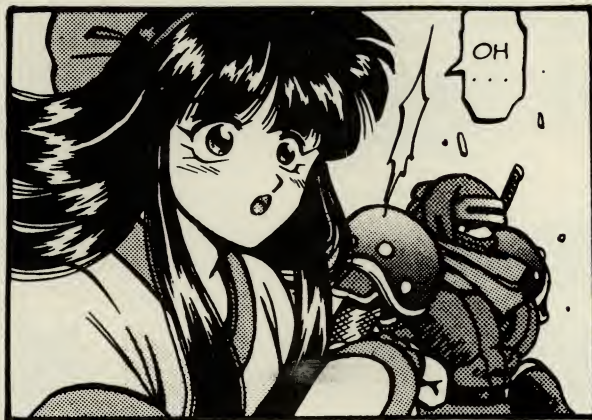
I
WILL
RETURN
...



DESPAIR
NOT IN THE
CURSED
DUNGEON
OF THE
BASTILLE!



...TO
FREE OUR
HOMELAND
FROM THE
DOMINATION
OF THE DEVIL
AMBROSIA!

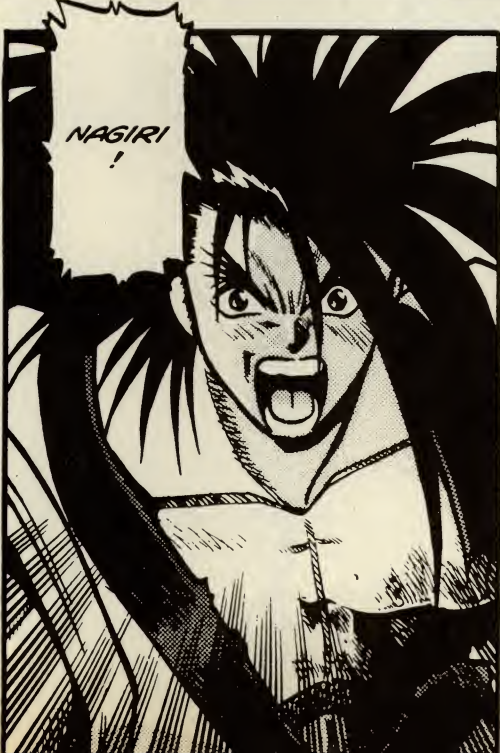




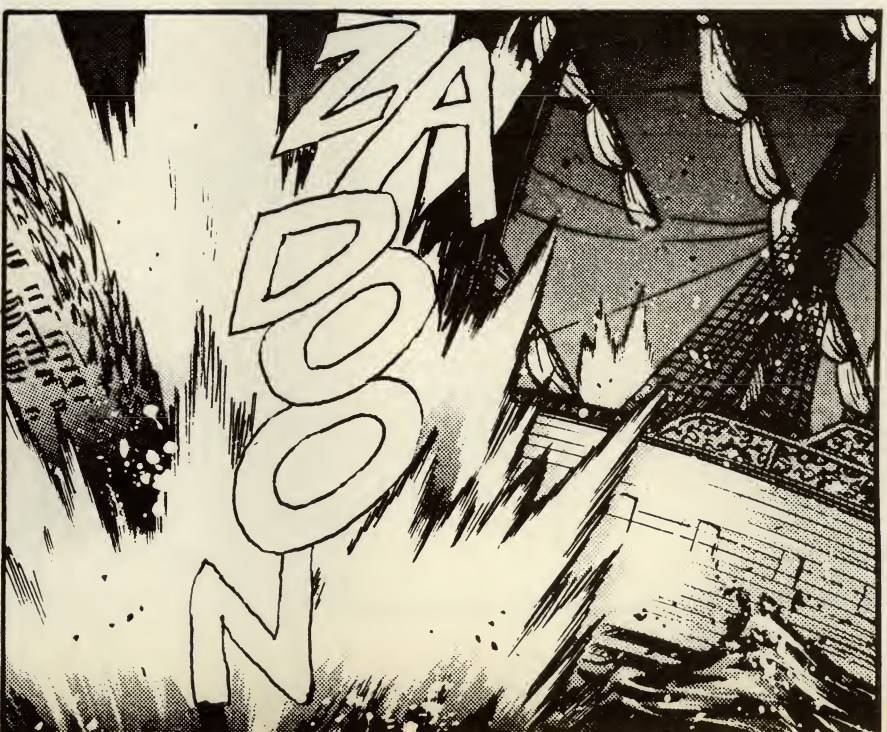
Pitiful
humans who
rebel against
my lord, the
DEVIL
AMBROSIA
...



Now
you shall
receive the
merciful
gift of
DARKNESS!



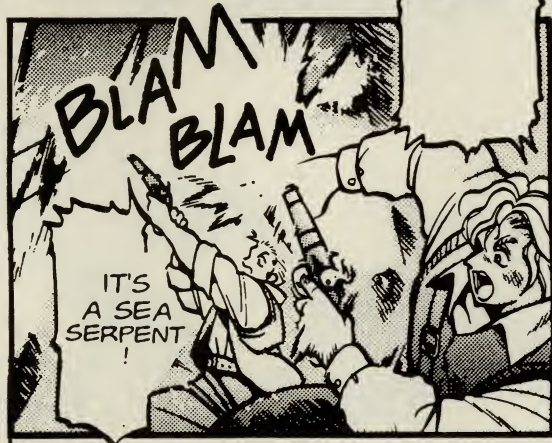
NAGIRI
!



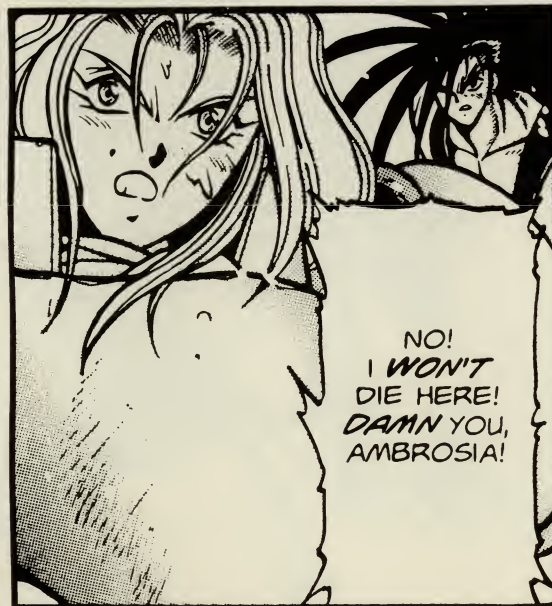
ZAN
DO
NO



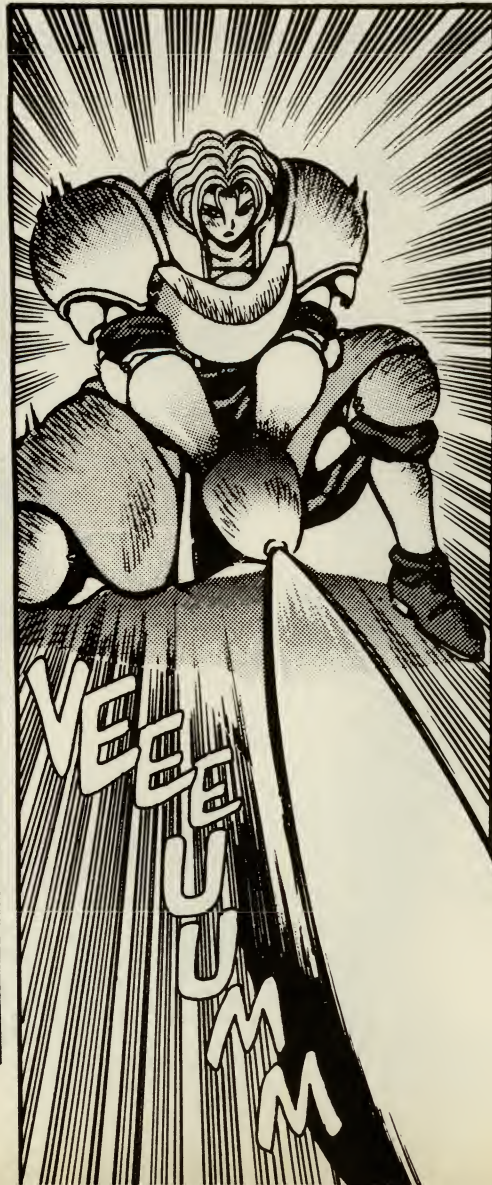
ATTACK!
SHOOT!



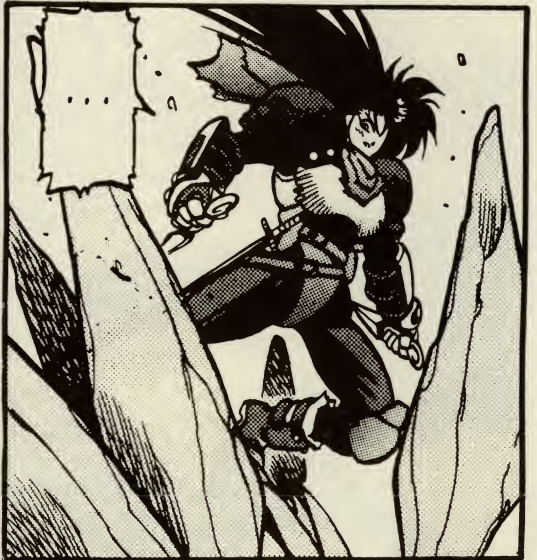
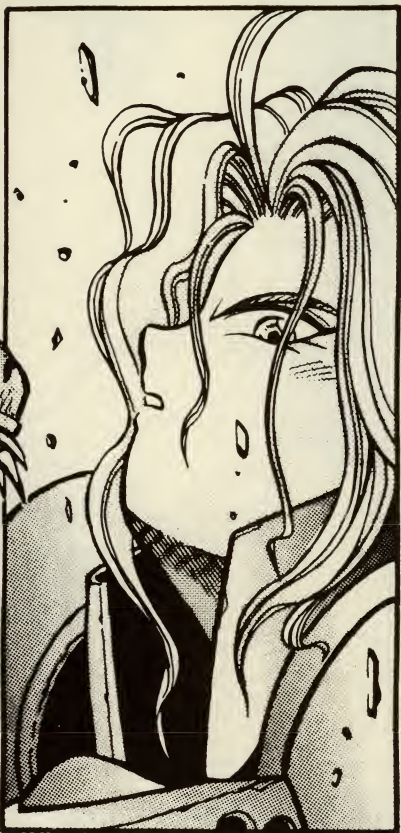
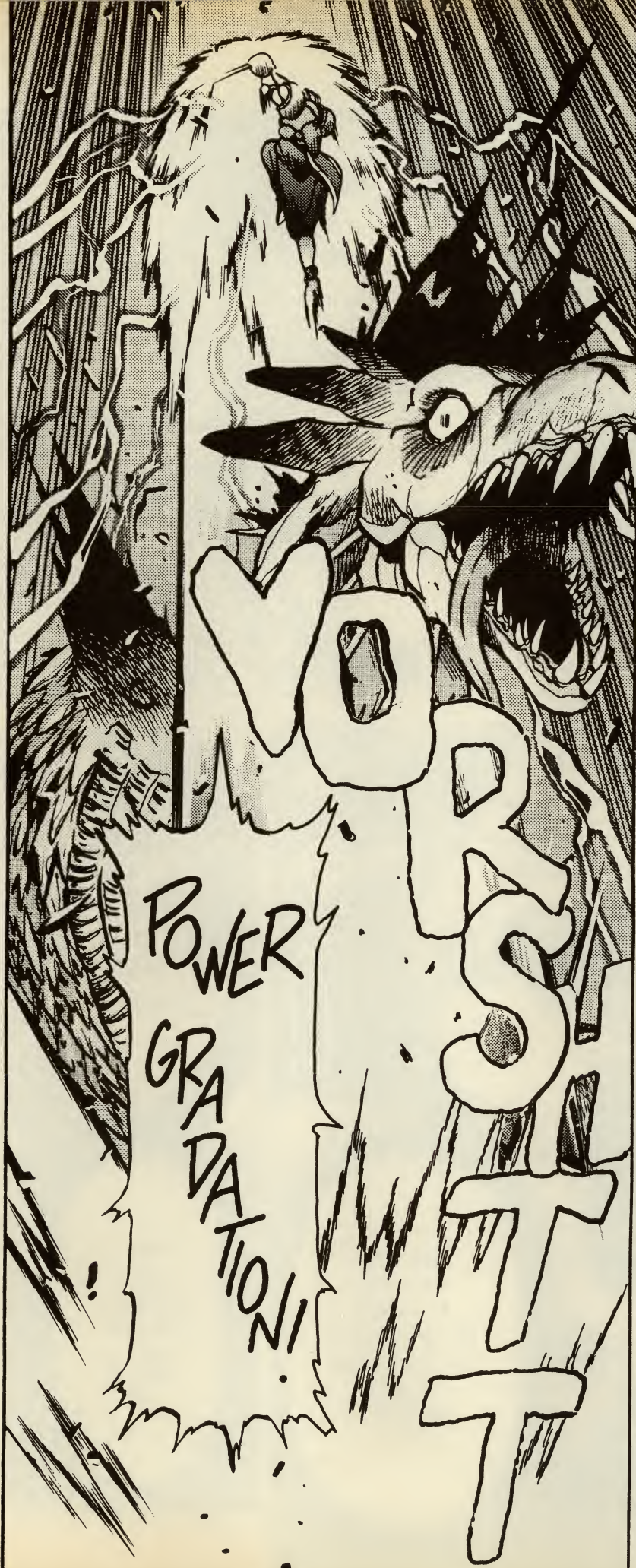
IT'S
A SEA
SERPENT!

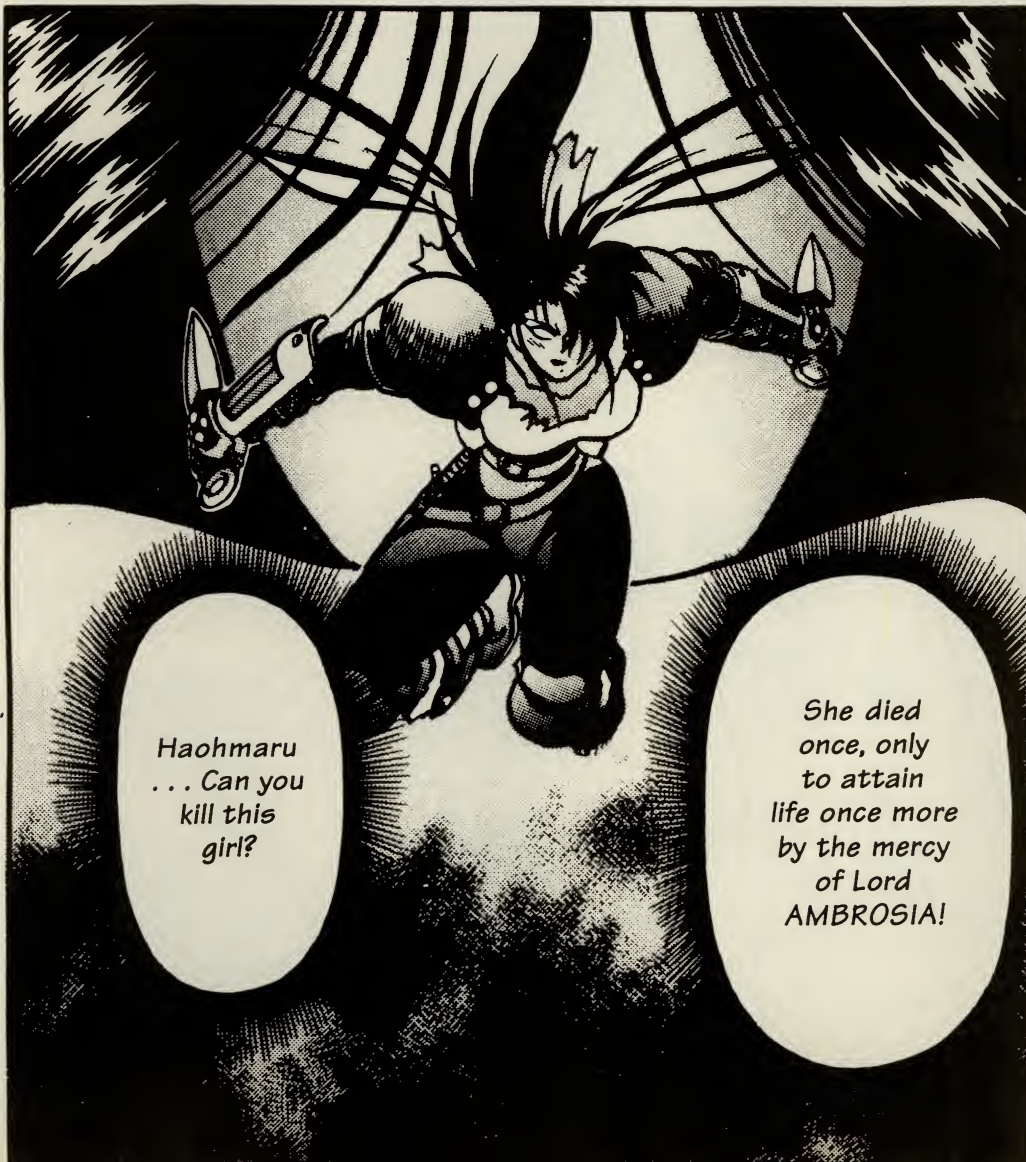
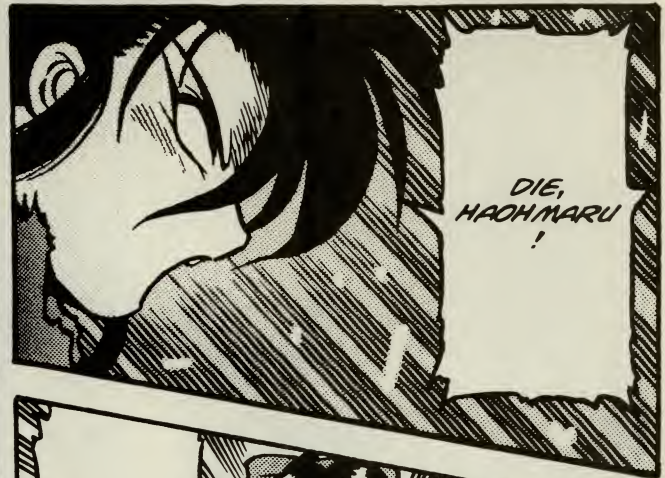
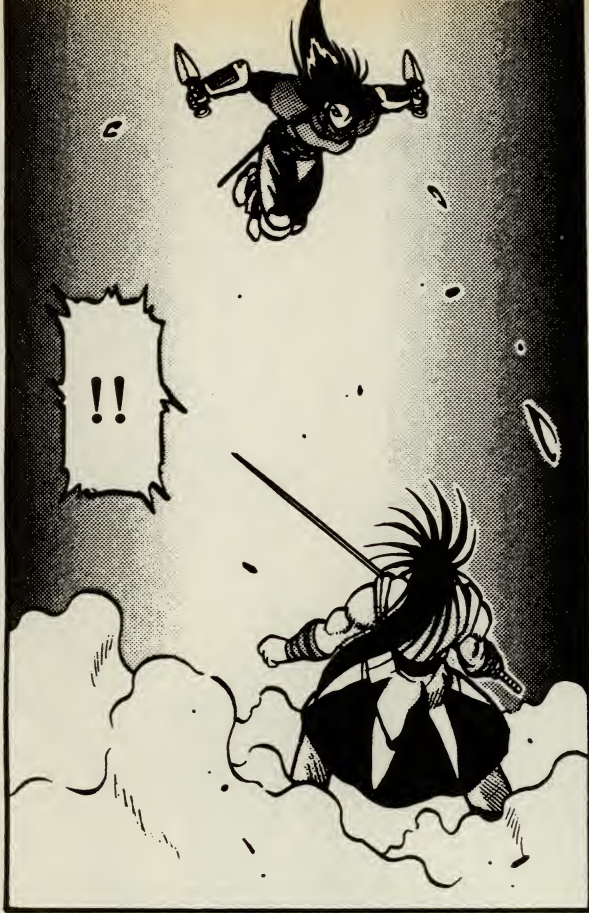


NO!
I WON'T
DIE HERE!
DAMN YOU,
AMBROSIA!



HAAA!!





Haohmaru
... Can you
kill this
girl?

She died
once, only
to attain
life once more
by the mercy
of Lord
AMBROSIA!



Are
you
going to
kill this
girl -
TWICE
!?

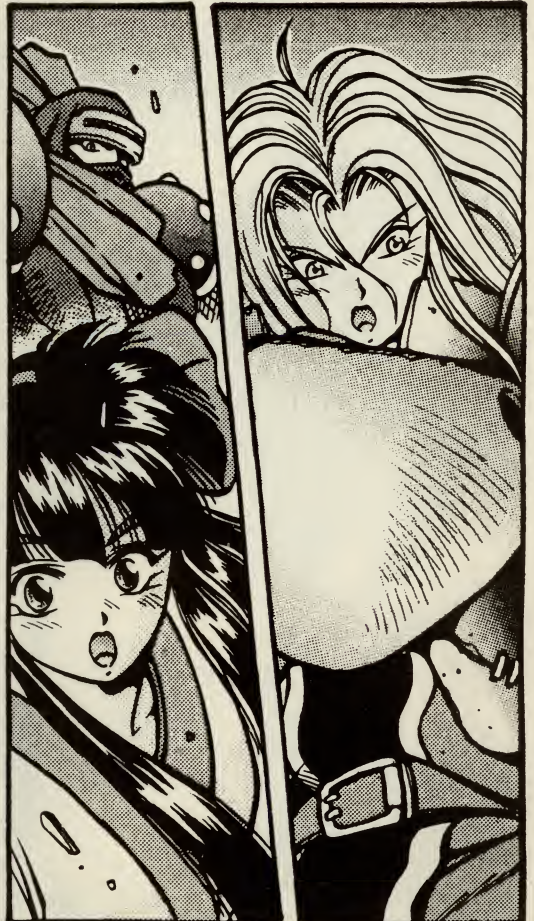


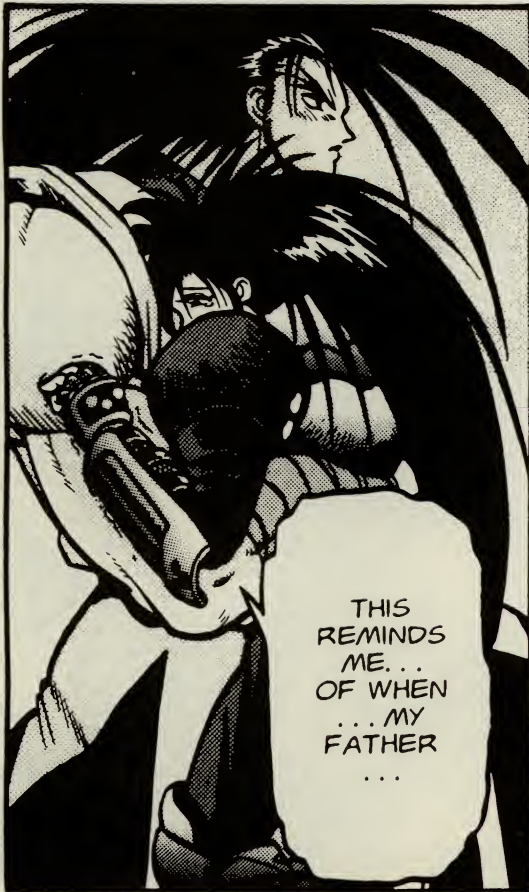
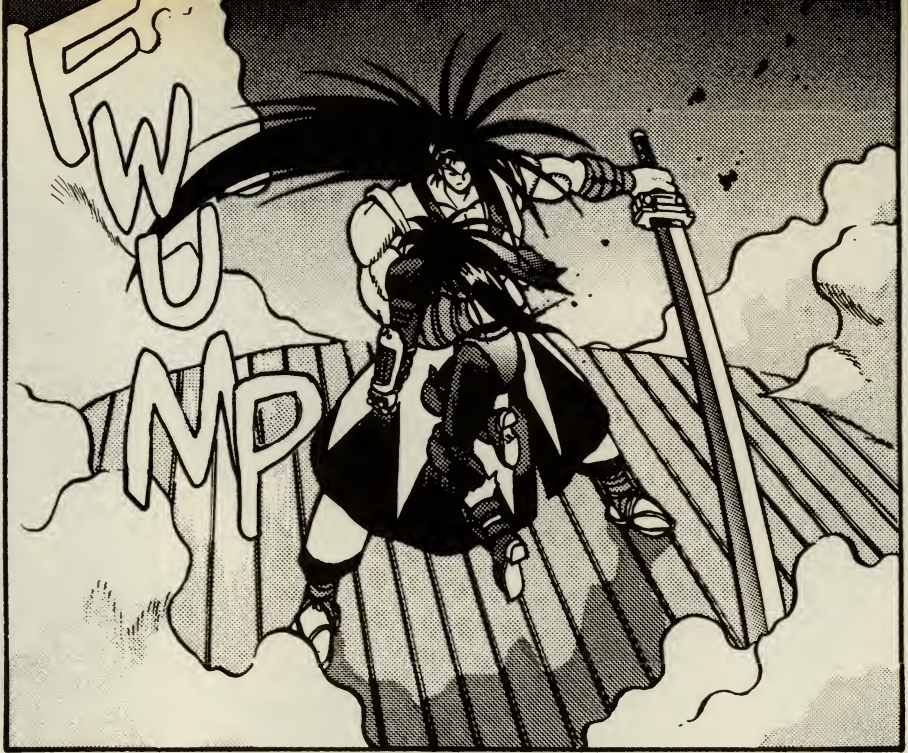
HAOHMARU,
DON'T
HESITATE!

I'M
ALREADY
DEAD!
FREE ME
FROM
THIS
HELL!



PLEASE
KILL
ME!





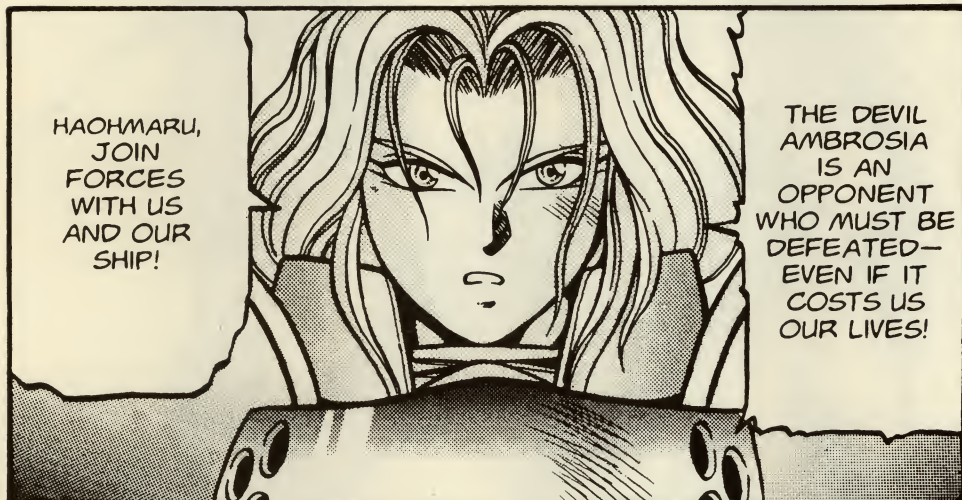
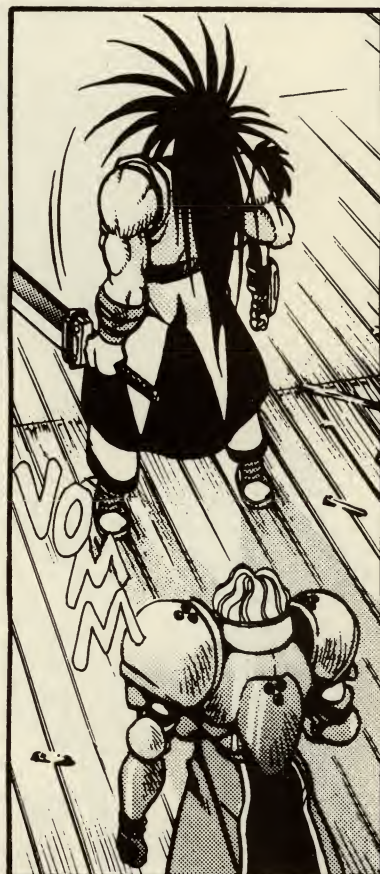


NAGIRI
...

...



THE
ENEMY
I'M AFTER—
IS YOUR
ENEMY
ALSO
...!?



HAOHMARU,
JOIN
FORCES
WITH US
AND OUR
SHIP!

THE DEVIL
AMBROSIA
IS AN
OPPONENT
WHO MUST BE
DEFEATED—
EVEN IF IT
COSTS US
OUR LIVES!



LET'S
DO
IT!

At last,
the final
battle against
YUI SHOSETSU
is about to
begin...!

WATCH FOR THE THRILLING CONCLUSION IN
THE SAMURAI SHODOWN GRAPHIC NOVEL,
COMING IN 1997!

ARCADE

Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo

We've been enjoying *Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo* for some time now, and have stumbled upon these codes. Yes, *SPFIT* not only has guest appearances from Gouki (Akuma) and Dan, but Capcom went a step further and added Devilot from the little-seen *Cyberbots: Hadoken!*



Hidden Characters

Did you think I'd forget to mention how to play as Dan, Akuma, or Devilot? The codes for them are really easy. As a whole, the base eight seem to be stronger than these three, but for the surprise factor, or just for fun (Dan vs. Anyone livens up most games). I highly recommend trying them out.

All Three:

All three of them start out the same way. If you are Player 1, start from Ryu. If you are Player 2, start from Ken.
1) From the select screen, start at your appropriate character, and press (and hold) the Start button.

2) Go down one to Morrigan/Felicia.

Now from here, this is how you reach...

Dan

- 1) Press down 13 times.
- 2) Press a button. Morrigan/Felicia will become Dan.

Devilot

Exactly the same as Dan (13 Down, Button) but watch the timer on the screen. When it says "10" (you have 10 seconds left to pick your character), press a button. Instead of Dan, Devilot will be there.

Akuma

- This one is different from the others.
- 1) If you are Player 1, move the controller Left, Down, Left, Down, Left, Down, Left (and hold the controller Left)
 - 2) Press a button. Akuma will be there.
 - 3) If you are Player 2, move the controller Right, Down, Right, Down, Right, Down, Right (and hold the controller Right)
 - 4) Press a button. Akuma!

For all characters, the pressing the left button will select their normal colors, while the right button will select the alternative colors.

"Who's that other girl at the end of the closing screen?"

Supposedly, Akuma, Dan, and Devilot are the only three hidden characters in the game, but if you beat the game on hard, all the characters appear at the end including one other. My early guess was that it was Lin-Lin (Hsien Ko's sister), but probably not now. It would be interesting to find out if there are any more secrets such as

Player vs. Dan (or Player vs. Devilot), or if there is a code for the "Mystery Lady." If anyone can confirm that these three are the only codes, or if there still are more secrets lurking within the game, please e-mail (game_on@sirius.com) or post them.

Tyrone Rodriguez

Ninja Masters

Play as the Bosses

The latest 2D fighting effort from the makers of *World Heroes* has codes to play as both Ranmaru (the female mini-boss with the deadly fans) and Nobunaga (the caped warlord and last boss). If you win the Time Attack mode without being defeated, it'll tell you these codes; but here they are, without the strife. Entering the single code accesses both bosses.

While on the character select screen, take the following path for Player One. When finished, press C + D simultaneously.

Left, Down, Left, Up, Left, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Right, Up

Take the following path for Player Two (a mirror-image of the Player One path). Don't forget to press C + D simultaneously!

Right, Down, Right, Up, Right, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Left, Up

Both boss characters have plenty of moves and are visually intimidating.

Alistair Toth

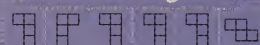


Tetris Plus

Secret Level Passwords

Stage select any of the 100 levels, or go to the five versions of Stage 20, with these codes.

Atlantis Stage 20



Maya Stage 20



Knossos Stage 20



Stage Select 1-100



Angkor Wat Stage 20



Egypt Stage 20



Alistair Toth

SATURN

Legend of Oasis

Game Shark Codes

36088720 0003 Have Level 3 sword
Note: The following codes won't let you complete the game, since you'll be too tall to enter most dungeons or too small to jump onto ledges.
Just for fun!
16088D88 0300 + 16088D8A 0300 Player is huge
16088D88 0040 + 16088D8A 0050 Player is tiny

Jay McGavren

PLAYSTATION

Dezaemon Plus



Game Shark Codes

- 8014E62C 0002 Infinite lives
- 8014E99C 0003 Infinite bombs
- 8014E9C4 0001 Shields always active
- 8014E1E8 0003 Always have fully powered weapons
- 8014E7B0 0003 Always have full speed
- 8014E64C 0000 Always have balcan A (spread shot)
- 8014E64C 0001 Always have homing laser

- 8014E64C 0002 Always have homing missiles
- 8014E64C 0003 Always have chargeable cannon
- 8014E64C 0004 Always have shadow laser
- 8014E64C 0005 Always have balcan B (V-formation)
- D00EA03A 0001 + 8016F940 00FF Once launched bombs don't die out until end of stage

Horned Owl (Japanese version)

Game Shark Codes

- 300B8805 0072 Never need to reload
- 800B880C 4600 Weapon is always fully charged
- 800B9CA4 0003 Infinite credits

Street Fighter Alpha

Game Shark Codes

- 80198A36 0000 All projectiles are stationary
 - 801870CE 0028 Player 1 has short jumps - air moves travel along the ground
 - 80187396 0028 Player 2 has short jumps
- The following codes make the player teleport to the cen-

ter of the arena whenever she presses the R2 button:
D018F128 0002 + 801870CA 016B Player 1
D018F132 0002 + 80187392 016B Player 2

Tobal No.1 (Japanese version)

Game Shark Codes

The following codes let you levitate by pressing L2:
D00CC8AC 0001 + 801F0368 0100 Player 1
D00CC8AE 0001 + 901F21B0 0100 Player 2
Jay McGavren

Tokyo Highway Battle

9,999,999 Upgrade Points

Buying upgrades is an important part of *THB*, and if you can't wait for the expensive ones, here's a code you'll need. At the title screen simultaneously press and hold **L1 L2 R1 down start** on Controller 2. Continue to hold until the Shop screen, and you'll have 9,999,999 points.

Alistair Toth

A HARD DAY'S KNIGHT



Humorous fantasy adventure meets magical anime girls—a **Record of Lodoss War/Slayers/Sailor Moon** crossover? No, it's all-female design studio CLAMP's **Magic Knight Rayearth**, one of the most popular manga/TV series in Japan—and one of the most popular Saturn games. A plan by TMS to bring the TV series to America this year fell through, but the RPG is still set for release in January 1997 by Sega's #1 third-party conversion company, Working Designs. Kelly, a source within Working Designs, tells why this title caught the eye of the Saturn RPG masters.

Game On! USA: When did you decide to port *Magic Knight Rayearth*?

WD: We decided in August of '95. It's taken us that long to secure the title and work it into our already full schedule. This title will require special attention, due to the large amount of audio and animation.

Game On! USA: Did your decision have something to do with the plans for a U.S. release of the TV series?

WD: The television series had very little to do with it. As with any game, we look at two things and two things only: Did we enjoy playing the game? And two, how much did we enjoy the game? In the case of *Rayearth* there was very little question; it's an awesome game!

Game On! USA: When was *Rayearth* released in Japan? How'd it do?

WD: *Rayearth* was released in Japan approximately one year ago. Its success in Japan has been phenomenal and it still boasts being the 9th ranking title in sales overall for the Saturn.

Game On! USA: Have you seen much of the TV series?

WD: I have seen one of the translated episodes, and I was less than impressed with the voice acting/translation of the series thus far. How does it compare to the game? Well, the anime itself is wonderful. It has a very light and humorous tone to it and has a very involved and exciting storyline. As for what I think of the American version (from the episode I saw), the translation leaves a lot to be desired. I've seen worse, but I've also seen a lot better.

Game On! USA: How long have you been working on changes in *Rayearth*? Have they been mostly translation, or has the game engine been effected much?

WD: We have been planning and working on improvements for *Rayearth* since day one. They are to both the original text and to the gameplay itself. As for what these changes are...you'll have to see when the game's released.

Game On! USA: Our playtesters have





Rayearth has atypical action scenes (would you believe a shooter sequence? We thought you wouldn't.)

commented that *Rayearth* was fun, but a little easy. Have you upped the difficulty level for the U.S. version, and if so, how?

WD: I'll answer your question with a question. Has Working Designs ever been known to release a game that is considered easy?

Game On! USA: *Rayearth's* an Action RPG...about what percentage of the game is action, and what is puzzle-solving, story, etc.? How does it compare to *Shining Wisdom*?

WD: One thing that is really appealing about *Rayearth* is the fact that it is almost a perfect balance of puzzles, action, and mazes. You definitely won't finish the game without racking your brain, pulling your hair out and swearing at your television. The game is certainly one of the most balanced RPGs I have ever played.

Game On! USA: About character count...do you always control all the three girls at once, or do they ever get separated? And what about the sidekick-animal?

WD: You are able to choose between any of the three girls to control and can toggle between them most any time. During the actual action parts of *Rayearth*, for the most part, the girls are never separated. The sidekick animal (a cute little bunny-thing called Mokona) does play a key role in the game, but you don't actually control him. At the very least, Mokona is a wonderful tool for comic relief.

Game On! USA: What would you say is the most innovative factor in *Rayearth*?

WD: The most innovative thing is actually several things. A very important game feature to mention is

the fact that while it is technically considered an Action RPG, it plays much more like a true RPG. The colors in the game are an amazing innovation that really haven't been exploited in any other title like they are in *Rayearth*. You'll find some of the most brilliant visuals ever before seen in a RPG (or any other type of game for that matter). There are innovations in plenty of other areas also (gameplay, graphics, storyline, etc.), but you'll just have to wait and find out when you play it.

Game On! USA: How many hours of gameplay would you estimate *Rayearth* has?

WD: The U.S. version of *Rayearth* will be a minimum of 30-40 hours the first time through. For those who like to go anywhere and find every item, you're looking at a much longer game. There's a mini-quest to satisfy those types.

Game On! USA: Did you have any contact with CLAMP when doing the conversion? I hear Victor Ireland [president of Working Designs—Ed.] is a fan.

WD: We have no direct dealings with CLAMP, other than being huge fans of their animation style. I can almost guarantee that CLAMP has heard of us in one way or another. From what we can tell they are perfectionists when it comes to their work, and like most perfectionists, I would assume that they like to keep tabs on anyone who is taking creative license with their work.

Game On! USA: Are there any other games based on CLAMP manga (*RG Veda*, *X:1999*, etc.) in the works, as far as you know?

WD: I am unaware of anyone else doing a game based on any of CLAMP's manga. However, with the quality of work they put out, I'm sure that someone in this field will be at least interested in seeing them.

Game On! USA: Working Designs has a great JRPG history. Where do you think your personal style of translating *Rayearth* shines through?

WD: *Magic Knight Rayearth's* complete conversion will be done by our core internal team. Our personal



style will shine through in the two major areas: the voice acting and the snappy humor which we have become so well known for. That's why a game like *Rayearth* is so perfect for us; the entire game is set with a very light and humorous tone, like a good comedy...Fear not however, we plan to keep the jokes very much within context of the storyline so as to preserve its original meaning. As with all our games there will be at least one manual page devoted to translation notes.



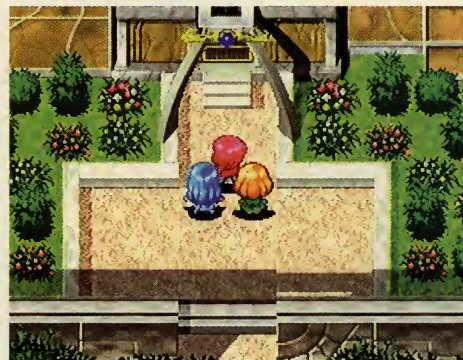
Game On! USA: The Japanese *Rayearth* has extensive voice clips. Have you dubbed them all into English? Who are your voice actors?

WD: No, we haven't dubbed all of the voices into English as of yet. We are somewhere in the middle of the audio phase. I can't tell you who's in it, but I will say that you will recognize some of the actors from some of our previous titles.

Game On! USA: *Rayearth* was produced in-house by Sega in Japan. How was your relationship with Sega about doing the port? Did Sega of America have any interest in doing it themselves?

WD: Our relationship has been and hopefully always will be a good one with both S.O.A. and S.O.J. Sega of America always looks at every title for possible release in this country. We would like to think they passed it up because they knew that a game like this one fell directly into our area of expertise. Our relationship with Sega at this point is almost like that of a family, where they made the decision not to translate the title, we expressed our interest and they were happy to let us license it.

Game On! USA: Thanks for your time! ☺





Xtravagant

X-Men Versus Street Fighter

System: Arcade
 Developer: Capcom
 Publisher: Capcom
 Release Date: 3rd Quarter (Japan/U.S.)

Perhaps Capcom, despite its success, has finally gone off the deep end: how else might one explain what's probably the strangest gaming crossover in history? And yet, in some unspeakable way, this new Capcom fighting game is quite possibly the company's most predictable move since **Super Street Fighter II Turbo**. This decidedly bizarre game was likely conceived in a smoke-filled bar over a bottle of sake or three, and offers no plausible excuse for itself. But it's a blast to play regardless, so who cares?

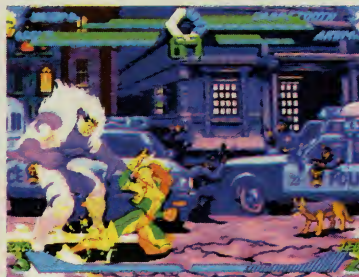
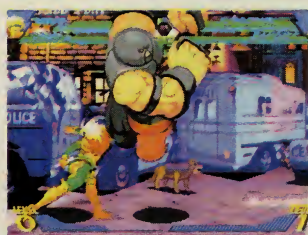
X-Men Versus Street Fighter's most obvious feature is its tag-team play: choose any two characters, and switch between them at any time by pushing the fierce attack buttons simultaneously. Your teammate promptly sails feet-first into the mix, and poses arrogantly for a moment as his buddy leaps out of sight. If one team member sustains damage, switch characters and let him rest and regain some of his strength. Use character switches with-in attack combinations or to stuff pesky fireball throwers. Alpha Counters are replaced with Variable Counters (your teammate jumps in and pummels the culprit), and your custom duo can even unleash their death moves simultaneously to completely overwhelm the foe. The new tag-team battles, clearly influenced by SNK's 3-on-3 **King of Fighters** series, make for some truly action-packed grudge matches; there are no round breaks, and the fight is not over until both teammates are defeated!

Add the chaotic tag team gameplay to Capcom's infamous, button-mashing **Marvel Super Heroes** engine and you've got yourself perhaps the goofiest, most visually stunning, and certainly the most blistering fighting game to date. On the X-Men side return favorites Wolverine, Cyclops, Storm, Juggernaut, and Magneto. They are joined by the feral Sabretooth, the poker-faced trickster Gambit, and the power-stealing Southern belle Rogue. Ryu, Ken, Chun Li, Charlie, M. Bison, Zangief, Dhalsim, Akuma and **Game On! USA** #1 covergirl Cammy represent the Street Fighters. The Street Fighters are the guest stars, making the transition to the Marvel universe by learning superior special moves and gaining ridiculous jumping abilities. Ryu's trademark fireball is now as tall as the karate master himself, and Russian strongman Zangief grabs across a third of the screen for his deadly, explosive Spinning Pile Driver.

X-Men Versus Street Fighter uses a great deal of recycled graphics and sounds, but awe-inspiring special effects and grandiose backgrounds succeed in giving **X-Men Versus Street Fighter** a fresh coat of paint where the character design remains unchanged. Possibly the slickest new detail is the brief comic book-style close-up portrait that appears as a character executes a death move. Marvelous!

Greg Kasavin

The Last Word **X-Men Versus Street Fighter** is a furiously fun game. It's light on strategy, instead relying on its visual punch and anything-goes play mechanics. What's next? **Marvel Versus Capcom**, adding the **Fantastic Four** and the **Darkstalkers**? I can't say I'd be surprised!



Greg Kasavin, a cross-platform gamer for well over a decade, has been involved in the electronic entertainment industry for several years. When he's not thrashing opponents at his favorite SNK fighting games, he's often writing or tinkering away with the latest RPG or strategy title. "It's research!" insists Kasavin, who studies game design and intends to be a part of the gaming scene for many years to come.

Saved

Dark Savior

System: Sega Saturn

Developer: Climax

Publisher: Sega

Availability: Now (Japan), 4th Quarter 1996 (U.S.)

Dark Savior, Climax's sequel to the Mega Drive *Landstalker*, marks a new level in action RPGs, setting new standards in story, graphics, replayability, and gameplay, that will have RPGers the world over rejoicing.

In *Dark Savior*, you assume the role of Ryu-Ya, a bounty hunter. En route via ship to dropping off a dangerous criminal named Villain on an island prison, Villain escapes to the island. Ryu-Ya is forced to pursue. Along the way, Ryu-Ya must interact with many NPCs; solve many puzzles, usually accomplished by moving or destroying items; find secret items, such as booze, cigarettes, and porno magazines, all of which are used to trade for combat pay (experience points), items, or information; and fight bosses. Ryu-Ya is responsible for most of the inmates being on Jayler's Island, so don't expect too much help in your quest to recapture Villain.

The system for fighting bosses is highly unique. The fights are set up like a 2D fighting game. The fights consist of special moves, finishing moves, and capture opportunities, all of which earn you combat pay, which can be used to level up, refill your health meter, and the like. Every boss that you capture can be summoned in later fights to help Ryu-Ya, so capturing not only earns you extra pay, but is beneficial later in the game. The graphics in *Dark Savior* are sharp, clean, and feature some of the best 3D seen on the Saturn yet. The view is 3D isometric, which can lead to some confusion as to what your character is doing and exactly where he is. This was a major complaint people had about *Landstalker*. To solve this problem, Climax has included a feature to allow you to change the camera angles, which is compatible with the Sega Multi Controller. The analog pad automatically allows you to pan the camera around Ryu-Ya. By holding the left shift key down while using the analog pad, you can zoom the camera in and out. If you do not have the Multi pad, fear not, *Dark Savior* is also compatible with the standard digital pad.

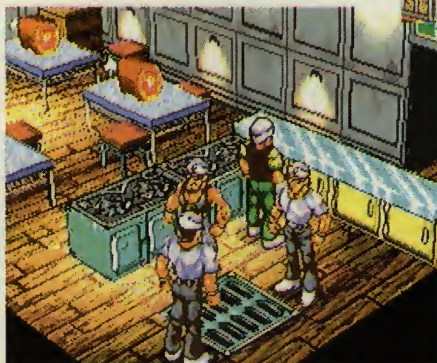
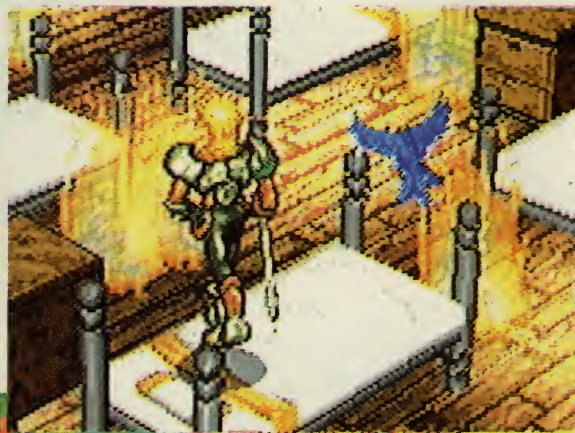
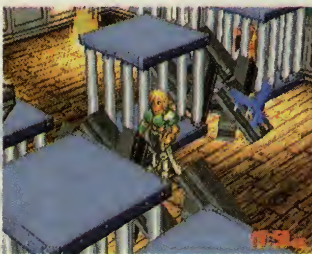
As spectacular as *Dark Savior* may already seem, the most revolutionary aspect of this game has not even been touched on yet. Depending on your actions in the introductory "parallel" (chapter), the entire plot and endings of the game changes. Depending on your actions in the different chapters, you open up different sub-plots. This adds an immense replayability to the game.

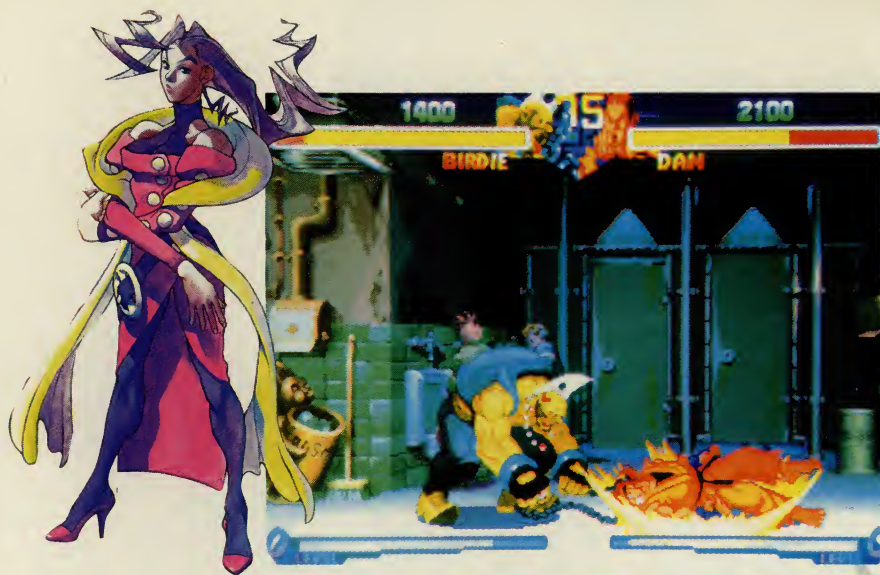
Perry Scott

The Last Word If you imported this game, also plan on buying the domestic version, too, as it will be made more difficult. *Dark Savior* is, perhaps the best action RPG to hit the Saturn yet, and in all truthfulness, one of the best action RPGs ever.



Perry Scott (Nakoruru@usa.pipeline.com) is a college student double-majoring in English and Philosophy, an anime fan, and a import video game fanatic. He plans on teaching the English language in Japan.





Zero or Hero

Street Fighter Alpha 2

System: Sony PlayStation, Sega Saturn
 Developer: Capcom Japan
 Publisher: Capcom
 Availability: Now (Japan, U.S.)

Street Fighter Zero, aka *Street Fighter Alpha*, was a good game on the PSX and Saturn, but it lacked a certain something to make it truly fantastic. Around the same time that most of us were enjoying *SFA* on the PlayStation and Saturn, arcades around the country got a hold of *Street Fighter Alpha 2*. Although a solid fighting game many *Street Fighter* purists felt that *SFA* didn't live up to the *SF* legacy. Among the complaints were Alpha Counters should be removed, Chain Combos weren't part of the original *SF* engine, and Super Combos inflicted way too much damage. Don't forget that the character selection was a bit small by today's standards. Capcom kept the Alpha Counters, left only "marginal" chain combos, and reduced Super Combo damage; they also bumped up the character count and added the insane Custom Combos.



As far as *Street Fighter Alpha 2* goes, the game is flawed yet remains fun. Rolento (of *Final Fight*), Gen (*Street Fighter*), Zangief (*Street Fighter II*), Dhalsim (*Street Fighter II*), and the Ryu-obsessed Sakura (the only real new fighter) join the battle. While five extra selectable characters (not including Gouki, Dan and Vega) is good and fine, Capcom should have gone the extra mile to have—if not newly designed fighters—at least cool ones. Strider maybe, or even Devilot from *Cyberbots*. Who really even remembers Gen from *SF*? What about Rolento from *Final Fight*? In comparison to previous backdrops the new ones are quite a treat—especially with the dying CPS2 system. Gameplay is *Street Fighter* all over which is, of course, expected. It's astonishing to see the amount of strategy that can go on in one simple four minute match.

As a conversion *SFA2* is to the CPS2 system what *Tekken 2* on the PlayStation is to System 11. The Saturn and PlayStation versions shine equally although the Saturn has the edge because of the true 6-button controller. The Sony pad actually has a detrimental effect on gameplay. Visually there's nothing to complain about. The colors found in the arcade kit are faithfully reproduced both on the Saturn and PlayStation. The sound is right on! (pun intended) from your standard Sonic Boom to the ever so subtle grunts. Control feels just right, but as mentioned the Saturn wins hands down in that department.

SFA2 can't be any better otherwise the title would be *Street Fighter III*. As always there is room for improvement, but *SFA2* easily claims the crown of benchmark 2D fighter for both 32-Bit consoles. The eye-candy can't match the decidedly realistic movements of *Tobal No. 1*, but it is still silky smooth. Compare *SFA2* to *X-Men* and a great game looks even better. You would do well in getting a hold of a copy of *SFA2* by any means possible—sell your anime collection if necessary. Well, not really, but if you have to...

Tyrone Rodriguez

The Last Word Both as a stand alone and from a conversion standpoint, *SFA2* is a must-have—especially the Saturn translation.



Tyrone Rodriguez is currently finishing up his *Final Fantasy* CD collection and hopes to have the set complete by the time you've read this. He recommends you pick up *Revelations: Persona*—if you can handle it. Being the good Samaritan that he is, Tyrone continues to dig up dirt, codes and anything else of interest to Game On! readers. Wadda nice guy!

Trick or Treat

Tecmo's Deception

System: PlayStation

Developer: Tecmo

Publisher: Tecmo

Availability: Now (Japan, U.S.)

There's a fine line between "horrifying" and "spooky," and *Tecmo's Deception* walks it. The game itself is a sort of Sim Haunted House; you play the bad guy, seeking revenge on those who framed and killed you by luring them into your deadly castle. Will you win back your loved one, or raise the devil to destroy the world? Considering how most games are bowdlerized in the U.S., how could you not like a game which has "the Evil Lord Satan" in the instruction manual?

Tecmo's Deception is a strange mix of story and two kinds of gameplay. The game is a cross between a "Trap Simulation" where you position traps on a 2D map, and a *Doom*-style polygon corridor game. The 3D engine looks decent, and some sequences place you convincingly within the gloomy mansion, complete with disturbing noises and enemies (victims?) approaching out of the dark.

The enemies you face vary in appearance (some, such as the FateMakers and knights, look cool; others do not), but their movement patterns are less complex. The AI is so bad that people will chase you towards a door and then forget about you when the door closes, and since the 3D is confined within a square floor grid, enemies spend long, unrealistic periods bumping into and inching around pillars, walls, and other obstructions. Some have surprising powers (i.e. the teleporting, jumping ninjas), but for the most part they follow and attack you, allowing you to trigger traps. This is the fun, vicious part of the game; watching giant iron feet, huge spikes, and other dangers maim your opponents. You can pummel them until they die, or (difficult, but especially important in the later levels) trap them with cages and cranes and take them prisoner. The need to be personally close to the traps to set them off gives the game its action elements, but a few remote-triggered traps and means of watching your opponents from afar would improve the strategy.

Unfortunately, *Tecmo's Deception* doesn't match the depth of a true sim. Most of the strategy consists of determining which traps effect which characters. The mansion's original rooms are stuck in place, and considering that you have to spend the entire game prowling its halls, there is sadly little opportunity in the construction sequences to add "personality" to them (such as your choice of furniture, texture maps, bloodstains...). The need to set new traps for nearly every wave of attackers (your old ones vanish) often means that you must replace the same traps over and over again. As you progress, the game grants you more powers, but saves the best (such as monster creation... yes!) for late in the game, and the rate is slow.

Ultimately, there are two reasons to play *Tecmo's Deception*: to see new enemies and traps; and to follow the story, which offers a few points of interactivity and entertaining moral situations as your character goes from killing people who deserve it to attacking innocents of all kinds.

Alistair Toth

The Last Word It's good to see such a bizarre title released in the U.S., but its different elements—strategy and corridor—don't always mesh. The game has surprises and secrets which ask for replaying, but the gameplay is slow and clunky, and the strategies don't change much from beginning to end.



Alistair Toth is to RPGs what bread is to butter: dry and desperate without them. A twentysomething artist with past experience in the video game industry, he wants to go on record as saying he "comes for the story, stays for the gameplay" and believes that the perfect balance between these two is what eludes most games from Japan (American games have their own problems).

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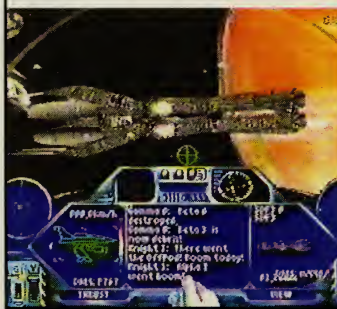
It has no less than two features in its debut issue—and is updated close to daily! Check us out on the Web, starting November 22!



Feature Presentation ROBOTECH:

CRYSTAL DREAMS

Gametek's plans to bring **Robotech** to the Nintendo 64 were initially met with skepticism. But in January the game may be ready, and gamers and fans will be answered! Check out the storyline and 3D space-shooter gameplay. See as many screen shots and animation frames as will fit on an 8 MB cartridge! Is it America's first and splashiest contribution to manga gaming? It's not over until Minmay sings!



GUNDAM 0079: THE WAR FOR EARTH

Gundam fandom has supported dozens of Japanese games...will it now be a hit in the U.S., from U.S. developer Presto Studios? CG-rendered Mobile Suits and an armada of outer-space mecha can sure make a game look good, but now Presto Studios speaks about the gameplay itself—and about their relationship with Bandai that made **Gundam 0079** for PlayStation and Pippin possible. Will it be the Pippin's first hit?



Next Issue: Japanese developer interviews, featuring RED, the developer of **Sakura Wars**, a Saturn military simulation with anime character designs by **Oh! My Goddess** artist Kiyosuke Fujishima!



Plus:

Reviews—*Samurai Shodown RPG* (finally!), *King's Field 2*, *Over Blood*, *Star Gladiator*, and more...including a numerical rating system and "dis-senting" sub-reviews!

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